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METHODS WITH BEGINNERS

FRANCES WELD DANIELSON

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METHODS WITH BEGINNERS

BY

FRANCES WELD DANIELSON

A Textbook in the Standard Course in Teacher Training, Outlined and Approved by the Sunday School Council of Evangelical Denominations.

THIRD YEAR SPECIALIZATION SERIES

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SUNDAY SCHOOL COUNCIL STANDARD COURSE IN TEACHER TRAINING

Beginners' and Primary Units

Nos. 1 and 3 separate for each department. *Periods*

1. Specialized Child Study (Beginners' and Primary Age) 10
2. Stories and Story Telling 10
3. Beginners' and Primary Methods 20
   Including Practice Teaching and Observation.

40

Junior Units

1. Specialized Child Study (Junior age) 10
2. Christian Conduct for Juniors 10
3. Junior Teaching Materials and Methods 10
4. Organization and Administration of the Junior Department 10

40

Intermediate, Senior and Young People's Units

Separate for each department.

1. Study of the Pupil 10
2. Agencies of Religious Education 10
3. Teaching Materials and Methods 10
4. Organization and Administration of the Department 10

40

General Course on Adolescence. Same subjects as above but covering the entire period 12-24 in each unit.

Adult Units

1. Psychology of Adult Life 10
2. The Religious Education of Adults 10
3. Principles of Christian Service 10
4. Organization and Administration of the Adult Department 10

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1. Outline History of Religious Education 10
2. The Educational Task of the Local Church 10
3. The Curriculum of Religious Education 10
4. Problems of Sunday School Management 10

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EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

SPECIALIZATION COURSES IN TEACHER TRAINING

In religious education, as in other fields of constructive endeavor, specialized training is today a badge of fitness for service. Effective leadership presupposes special training. For teachers and administrative officers in the church school a thorough preparation and proper personal equipment have become indispensable by reason of the rapid development of the Sunday-school curriculum, which has resulted in the widespread introduction and use of graded courses, in the rapid extension of departmental organization and in greatly improved methods of teaching.

Present-day standards and courses in teacher training give evidence of a determination on the part of the religious educational forces of North America to provide an adequate training literature, that is, properly graded and sufficiently thorough courses and textbooks to meet the growing need for specialized training in this field. Popular as well as professional interest in the matter is reflected in the constantly increasing number of training institutes, community and summer training schools, and college chairs and departments of religious education. Hundreds of thousands of young people and adults, distributed among all the

Protestant Evangelical churches and throughout every state and province, are engaged in serious study, in many cases including supervised practice teaching, with a view to preparing for service as leaders and teachers of religion or of increasing their efficiency in the work in which they are already engaged.

Most of these students and student teachers are pursuing some portion of the Standard Course of Teacher Training prepared in outline by the Sunday School Council of Evangelical Denominations for all the Protestant churches in the United States and Canada. This course calls for a minimum of one hundred and twenty lesson periods including in fair educational proportion the following subjects:

(a) A survey of Bible material, with special reference to the teaching values of the Bible as meeting the needs of the pupil in successive periods of his development.

(b) A study of the pupil in the varied stages of his growing life.

(c) The work and methods of the teacher.

(d) The Sunday school and its organization and management.

The course is intended to cover three years with a minimum of forty lesson periods for each year. Following two years of more general study provision for specialization is made in the third year, with separate studies for Administrative Officers, and for teachers of each of the following age groups: Beginners (under 6); Primary (6-8); Junior (9-11); Intermediate

(12-14); Senior (15-17); Young People (18-24) and Adults (over 24). A general course on Adolescence covering more briefly the whole period (12-24) is also provided. Thus the Third Year Specialization of which this textbook is one unit, provides for nine separate courses of forty lesson periods each.

Which of these nine courses is to be pursued by any student or group of students will be determined by the particular place each expects to fill as teacher, supervisor or administrative officer in the church school. Teachers of Junior pupils will study the four units devoted to the Junior Department. Teachers of young people's classes will choose between the general course on Adolescence or the course on Later Adolescence. Superintendents and general officers in the school will study the four Administrative units. Many will pursue several courses in successive years thus adding to their specialized equipment each year. On another page of this volume will be found a complete outline of the Specialization Courses arranged by departments.

A program of intensive training as complete as that outlined by the Sunday School Council necessarily involves the preparation and publication of an equally complete series of textbooks covering no less than thirty-six separate units. Comparatively few of the denominations represented in the Sunday School Council are able independently to undertake so large a program of textbook production. It was natural, therefore, that the denominations which together had

determined the general outlines of the Standard Course should likewise coöperate in the production of the required textbooks. Such coöperation, moreover, was necessary in order to command the best available talent for this important task, and in order to insure the success of the total enterprise. Thus it came about that the denominations represented in the Sunday School Council, with a few exceptions, united in the syndicate production of the entire series of Specialization units for the Third Year.

A little more than two years have been required for the selection of writers, for the careful advance coördination of their several tasks and for the actual production of the first textbooks. A substantial number of these are now available. They will be followed in rapid succession by others until the entire series for each of the nine courses is completed.

The preparation of these textbooks has proceeded under the supervision of an editorial committee representing all the coöperating denominations. The publishing arrangements have been made by a similar committee of denominational publishers likewise representing all the coöperating churches. Together the Editors, Educational Secretaries and Publishers have organized themselves into a voluntary association for the carrying out of this particular task, under the name *Teacher Training Publishing Association.* The actual publication of the separate textbook units is done by the various denominational Publishing Houses in accordance with assignments made by the Publishers'

Committee of the Association. The enterprise as a whole represents one of the largest and most significant ventures which has thus far been undertaken in the field of interdenominational coöperation in religious education. The textbooks included in this series, while intended primarily for teacher-training classes in local churches and Sunday schools, are admirably suited for use in interdenominational and community classes and training schools.

This particular volume entitled *Methods With Beginners* is one of four specialization units for the beginners' department. It presents in an interesting and readable style an unusually complete study of the methods of work to be used in this department. Observation and practice work form an important part of the course. The other units in this series deal with (1) *Specialized Child Study* and (2) *Stories and Story Telling*. These three text-books provide a remarkably comprehensive and valuable training course for teachers and officers in the Beginners' Department of the church school.

For the Teacher Training Publishing Association,

HENRY H. MEYER,

Chairman Editorial Committee.

SIDNEY A. WESTON,

Editor, Congregational Publishing Society.

LESSON I

OFFICERS, TEACHERS, AND CHILDREN

Within rather wide limits the child now has control over his mental life independent of things and persons. He is also introduced at this time to a wider physical and social environment than that of the home. It is, therefore, preminently a period for more complete mental reorganization and the development of the human personality into an individual personality.—E. A. Kirkpatrick, in *The Individual in the Making.*

Teaching methods.—Most students enter upon a course in teaching methods with a sense of undertaking something mechanical, like running a machine. This is a false expectation. Children are not machines, to be run. They are personalities, to be developed. Machines are uniform. Children are individual. The teaching method to which one child responds may have no effect upon another, and must be modified or abandoned.

A student of teaching methods, therefore, need not look forward to memorizing a set of rules, which will be applied according to directions. She will have to exercise judgment and discernment and choice in the use of any teaching methods with her particular group of children and with the various members of the group.

Forget, for a moment, that you are a student, and simply look at four interesting pictures.

The first picture.—The first picture is a semicircle of six children four and five years old and

their teacher. A screen hung with pictures makes the circle complete. The teacher speaks of two absent ones, and with the children counts to six. She writes "Six" on a bit of paper and tells a child to put it and the basket of pennies that have been collected on a stand outside the door, ready for the school secretary. The little group gather about the piano, and while the teacher plays they sing together. Informal conversation, prayers, blackboard work, pantomime, references to pictures and story-telling follow one another naturally and delightfully. The teacher then gives out folders containing the story, helps with refractory buttons and tight rubbers, and says good-by to each child in the line that passes out. As she puts a small purse on the "Lost Articles" shelf of the closet she takes down her record book, marks the attendance, makes a note of a birthday that falls the next week, and empties the birthday bank.

This is a picture of a Beginners' Department. Though very small, it has the essential elements—children and a teacher. As you have seen, this teacher easily combines the offices of superintendent, secretary, treasurer, and pianist.

The second picture.—In the second picture little children flock into a Beginners' room. A screen between door and chairs hides the newcomers from those already seated, who are eagerly engaged in conversation with their teacher. These newcomers are not neglected. An assistant removes their wraps and collects the pennies. She makes the shy children feel

at home, and persuades any who are inclined to be boisterous to take their places quietly. When it is time to begin thirty small chairs are filled. The assistant takes her place at the piano and by a soft melody induces an atmosphere of quiet expectation. She then starts a greeting song, and while the children shake hands, leaves the piano to usher some visitors to their seats without attracting attention. She is back again at her post, ready for the opening prayer, and has the basket of money on the teacher's table, in time for the offering service. Her watchword is "alertness," for, though she has the teacher's program, she knows that the attitude and remarks of the children will alter it. A card on the piano contains titles and numbers of familiar songs, so she is prepared for any child's choice. Occasionally she starts a song that fits into the thought of the hour. She finds time to put the offering and attendance records outside for the school secretary. She does not make out her own records till after the session, as she is much too interested in the lesson. Besides, her records include not merely attendance but causes for absence, home conditions, and plans for keeping in touch with the children. In addition to the duties already mentioned, she is ready to distribute paper, crayons, or other material, and provide damp cloths to wipe chalk-stained fingers. At the close of the session she gives out the folders, helps with the wraps, and sends home folders to absent pupils by brothers and sisters.

In the second picture you see a Beginners' Depart-

ment large enough to require an assistant, who is combined secretary, treasurer, and pianist. The offices of secretary and treasurer are, however, minor portions of her task during the session. It is more important for her to follow the program with appreciation and protect teacher and children from interruptions. She is quick to detect and remedy poor ventilation. She does not allow the teacher to be disturbed by late pupils, or the program to be retarded by her delay in finding the expected song. The teacher would feel lost without her, and yet is scarcely aware of her—the curious attitude one has toward those who are indispensable.

Occasionally this picture includes a mother or young girl who assists often enough to keep in touch with the department and serve as assistant when the regular assistant substitutes for the teacher.

The third picture.—The third picture is of a double semicircle of sixty children. We see a pianist who remains at the piano, for there are two other assistants. One acts as secretary and one as treasurer. They do not allow these duties to absorb their attention. Much of their work is done after the session. They greet the children, help in removing wraps, collect the pennies, seat visitors, distribute supplies and folders, attend to proper ventilation, and save the teacher from interruptions. Any spare moments they may have are not spent in counting the offering or computing the average attendance. They are too much absorbed in the program for this. They realize that unnecessary

tiptoeing about the room, or putting a cabinet in order, or whispered colloquies interfere seriously with the atmosphere of the room. The teacher often tells them that she can forgive duties neglected because of interest in the program far better than close attention to petty details that makes them oblivious of it; that there is a certain atmosphere that can be maintained only when pianist, assistants and visitors listen to the story she tells, enjoy the songs and appreciate the children's responses.

A Cradle Roll class of twelve children three years old is an adjunct to this department, although it meets in a separate room.

The fourth picture.—The fourth picture is in two parts. One part shows a Beginners' Department consisting of two Beginners' rooms, each with fifty children, divided according to age. The entire department numbers one hundred.

The second part pictures another department of one hundred, in which all the children meet together, in a double semicircle, for the opening service and a short portion of the circle talk. After this they divide into three smaller circles, separated by screens, for the remainder of the circle talk and the story period, and two of the assistants teach. In this case there are a superintendent, two other teachers, who are also secretary and treasurer, a pianist and two additional assistants. Each person has a certain number of children for whose presence she is responsible, and at whose

homes she calls. A Cradle Roll class is provided for the little children under four.

In every case, had you glanced into the room a half hour before the session, you would have found one or more assistants present to guide early comers to a table on which lay interesting scrapbooks, paper, and crayons.

The atmosphere.—These pictures have shown that the success of a Beginners' Department depends in great measure upon its homelikeness, and any organization which obtrudes itself defeats this end. In its simplest form it is a little group of children gathered about a teacher for religious nurture. Where its size demands a larger teaching corps, its informal and sympathetic atmosphere is still guarded. The word "teacher" has been used instead of "superintendent" to emphasize this informality, and because it is customary for the superintendent to teach. This can be done, as the department is not divided into classes, but all meet together with a common lesson. Occasionally a woman with executive rather than teaching ability superintends the department, and the teacher as well as assistants are under her supervision.

The assistants.—It may seem strange that in these pictures the assistants have been painted most distinctly, when, after all, they belong in the background. This is their one opportunity for prominence, as hereafter in the chapters that deal with the program the teacher will be the central figure—the teacher, and her children.

This question may arise: Who are these assistants, and how are they secured? In several cases they are young girls who like little children, and who have become so interested in the work in this department that they plan to become teachers. Others are already members of a training class, and get observation and practice here. Still others are mothers, who at first accompanied shy children, became fascinated and gladly serve as assistants.

The ideal teacher.—The first chapter is not complete without a sketch of a Beginners' teacher. She has two necessary qualifications—love of children and love of God. If she is a girl, she is one who has not only enthusiasm but the capacity for infinite patience. If she is an older woman, she is one who has kept a child's heart. Frequently she is a mother. Her fitness, however, does not depend upon actual motherhood, but upon the maternal spirit, which is occasionally lacking in mothers and sometimes found in one unmarried. Her love of God is colored with the missionary spirit, that craves this love for her children. She appreciates little children's limitations and sees their possibilities. Her keen sympathy with their point of view is coupled with a vision of the part religion should play in their lives.

Is this a discouragingly idealistic portrait? It should not be, for the Beginners' teacher often has at first only the two prime characteristics, and her portrait is completed by those to whom she is closely drawn—her children and God.

The children.—But the children themselves, for whom the department exists—whence do they come? If the department is newly organized, they are the young children who were a misfit in the Primary Department. This class of little children was formed no more for their sakes than to protect the older children from their disconcerting presence. Now that the class is started others will join.

If the department has been in existence for some time, the membership does not consist of little children dropped from a higher department, but of Cradle Roll members who have reached the age of four, and whose superintendent has notified the Beginners' teacher of this fact. Occasionally a group of these Cradle Roll graduates is promoted at the annual Promotion Day. More frequently they enter one by one at any time during the year when they are considered old enough. Where there is a Cradle Roll class for children three years old, they are promoted at the end of one year.

It is almost impossible to leave this topic without speaking of the charm of the children, for most of whom entrance into the Beginners' Department is their first venture from home. However, a picture of a little child is as inadequate as one of a fragrant rosebud, the more so because yesterday's picture would not be to-day's, nor to-day's to-morrow's. It is enough to say that to teach little, changing children is to one who loves them a constant delight spiced with unexpected discoveries.

Questions

1. What constitutes a Beginners' Department in its simplest form?
2. Who in addition to the teacher is needed in a department of thirty, and what are her duties?
3. Picture a department of sixty.
4. Describe two methods of conducting a department of one hundred.
5. Upon what kind of atmosphere does the success of a Beginners' Department depend?
6. How are assistants procured?
7. Give a sketch of the ideal Beginners' teacher.

Problems for Discussion

A. Whether to form a Beginners' Department with only four children four and five years of age.

B. The wisdom of starting a Beginners' Department without a trained teacher.

C. Allowing assistants practice in teaching.

LESSON II

THE ROOM AND ITS FURNISHINGS

The mind of a child is intensely concrete. He lives in a world of perceptions, rather than of thought. Round-eyed, quick to hear and eager to touch, he is busy absorbing the world about him.—Luther A. Weigle, in *The Pupil.*

Little children's surroundings.—In our first chapter you were asked to look at four pictures. They were moving pictures of teachers and children. I am curious to know whether you gave any thought to their environment, and whether you would examine as carefully four pictures of vacant Beginners' rooms. I doubt it. Interest in living beings transcends interest in walls and furnishings.

To be sure, there are surroundings that refuse to be mere background. There is the brilliant tinting that announces itself loudly. There is the row of grave, ministerial faces on the wall that offers an odd contrast to the fresh faces in the circle below. There are massive adult furnishings that crowd the children, and large-flowered carpets that call attention away from small feet. There are stained-glass figures that absorb the light which should be cast on childish ones, and large pictures that make one lose sight of the living child portraits.

Museums, picture galleries, ladies' parlors or prayer-meeting rooms are not nurseries. The Beginners'

room is the nursery of the church, where the spiritual life of her little children is fostered. Let the interests of children themselves determine what sort of place it shall be.

Location and floor.—To their room they come trooping—not upstairs, lest they stumble, nor downstairs, lest they lose the sunlight. Now, a room consists of walls, a floor, ceiling, doors, windows, and air. Suppose we consider the children's relations to all these. Shall their floor be covered with a carpet? Unless the janitor service is unusual, this will be a cause of dust-laden air, for they do not step lightly. Shall it be a waxed floor? If it is, there will be many a hurt to soothe, for they do not step carefully. No; let them cross a hard-wood border to a thick, soft-tinted rug that dulls their footsteps and forms a fitting background for highly prized new shoes. The floor may be ordinary boards painted an inconspicuous tint, and the rug manufactured from bits of old carpeting. Luxuries are not always possible, yet such a floor serves the children.

The ceiling.—As they come in they look about them, their eyes eager to find things of interest. When they look up we wish them to see nothing that will hold their attention. We want the ceiling forgotten. There are no elaborate decorations or gaudy colors or black furnace pipes—just simple whiteness. It may be that this can be achieved only by papering a cracked ceiling and covering necessary pipes with a painted

tin jacket. An effect of inconspicuous cleanliness is all that is necessary.

The walls.—The walls are a different proposition. We shall teach much by means of our walls, and they will help to create an atmosphere. They are tinted with careful reference to the room's location. If it is lighted from the north, the children find pale yellow walls radiating sunshine. Where the sunshine streams in through the windows the walls are the soft green of early leaves or the blue of the sky. The woodwork is light and varnished, or of the same tint as the walls, or painted white. The bright environment creates a sense of well-being, and the children's eyes are drawn to the burlap dado, on which are low-hung pictures of the stories they know and of the outdoor world. Just above these are a few well-framed pictures that are always there, and seem a part of the wall. The Sistine "Madonna" is one, "Christ Blessing Little Children" is another, a child praying at his mother's knee a third. A blackboard gives a promise of fascinating work to be done..

It may be the room is so large that false walls have to be made of burlap screens. It may be it is so small that the walls are extended by means of a piece of burlap fastened upon the back of the piano. The principle is the same. Walls are, of course, primarily to effect seclusion, but they serve two other purposes—to gain for the room the right atmosphere through color and to furnish a background for pictures.

Doors.—Doors are to be ranked with the ceiling,

in our hope that they may not attract attention. In our ideal room there is but one for entrance and exit, hidden by a screen, that late comers may enter unnoticed. If other doors intrude themselves, they are locked, or at least concealed by screens. Watch the children's eyes wander from the pictures to an opening door, for an opening door possesses the charm of the unknown.

Windows.—As we turn from doors to windows we are inclined to be epigrammatic and say: "Closed doors and open windows! Doors few and windows many." If we could see lungs work as we see eyes and muscles, we might be more particular about the air we provide. To have windows that may remain open in summer and can be opened frequently in winter is more necessary to a wholesome environment than the most æsthetic coloring. And these windows are of plain glass. Beginners are taught much through nature. Nature in some form is outside their room. If they cannot observe trees, grass, or birds, they can at least see the sky and the sun, or the rain and the snow and the action of the mysterious wind. It may be that a stained-glass window must remain in the room, but another window can be cut that will let in both air and the wonderful outdoors. A window that cannot be kept open without danger from drafts can have a window board placed beneath the lower sash, that allows the air to enter between the two sashes.

Furnishings.—As we let the children tell us what

kind of room they like, we will let their needs furnish it. There will be pandemonium if we leave them unseated, and wriggling and inattention if we seat them uncomfortably, so the first necessity is small, low chairs. The best are probably the Mosher hygienic chairs, but almost any which allow the feet to rest on the floor are satisfactory for the short session. It is wise to have two heights, or even three—ten, twelve and fourteen inches. There is never an excuse for dangling feet, as ordinary chair legs can be sawed off if new chairs are an impossibility.

In the arrangement we shall not forget to make the part of the wall containing the pictures and blackboard a part of our circle, completing the semicircle of chairs. A double semicircle is better than a closed circle, with nothing to see but one another. Remembering the lure of the door, we see that the backs of the majority of the children are toward it. We also place the seats for mothers and visitors where they will least attract the children's notice.

Next in importance are burlap screens, which are invaluable in preventing interruptions, and in tempering the heat of a furnace or the draft from an open window.

You noticed that several children came in with gifts of flowers. The teacher needs a low table for these and for her teaching material. When a new table cannot be had, a second-hand one may be made the required height. It stands beside her, forming part

of the magical circle, in which her chair is of the same height as the children's.

There is something that may take all the magic out of the circle, however, and that is having part of the children uncomfortable in outer garments, and the rest throwing their wraps on chairs and piano in disorderly piles. So we hasten to make use of the hooks in the clothes-room and passageway. If there are no such places, a simple rack will serve the purpose.

Disorder may be caused by supplies as well as clothing. Unless there is a suitable closet, a cabinet with a lock is needed of the right size for pictures, folders, crayons, drawing paper, paste, song-books, and whatever else is in common use.

The children need to be brought into the right spirit for the opening prayer. A few chords from a piano accomplish this. No other instrument is as well adapted to produce effects and to lead children's voices. If a piano is an impossibility, a teacher's voice is better than an inferior organ or an instrument shared with the Primary Department.

Tables for the children's use are not necessary. It interrupts the program far less to kneel upon the rug and use the chair seats for the simple forms of handwork possible for Beginners. Where these seats are not flat or are of cane, tables may be occasionally used, though many teachers prefer in that case to use the blackboard or a long strip of paper fastened to the wall. Freedom for movement and absence of anything that causes confusion are the great essentials.

Outdoor sessions and outside rooms.—Often a Beginners' room even approaching the ideal is a present impossibility. When this is the case the class can be held outdoors on a church lawn in suitable weather, in a neighboring house or parsonage, or even in a corner of a one-roomed church. Screens will aid in giving the required near-by walls and support for pictures, and in an outdoor session shield the class from distractions. A homelike room in a private house forms an environment infinitely superior to a dark, damp, unattractive church room, or one shared with other departments. However, no far-sighted teacher will rest content with this makeshift, for in the child's church itself should be the child's special room.

A last word.—Our last word is our first—that almost more important is what is left out of the Beginners' room than what furnishes it. Whatever may have to be there between sessions, allow nothing there during that one hour that is not of use to the children. You may think that one hour a week is not worth such infinite pains. Remember that it is this room which all through the children's lives will be associated with their early teaching about God.

Questions

1. Contrast a poor and an ideal Beginners' room in respect to its (*a*) location, (*b*) floor, (*c*) ceiling, (*d*) walls, (*e*) doors, and (*f*) windows.

2. Describe furnishings that are necessary.
3. Describe additional furnishings that are desirable.
4. Tell of possible substitutes for furnishings.

Problems for Discussion

How close one can come to ideal surroundings in (*a*) the corner of a church auditorium, (*b*) part of a Primary room, (*c*) a church kitchen, (*d*) a room in a near-by parsonage or house.

Assignments for Observation

1. Visit a Beginners' room and report as follows:
(1) Number of children. (Ask after the session whether this was an average attendance.)
(2) Ages of children.
(3) All in one circle or subdivided.
(4) The teaching force.
(5) Degree in which the organization obtruded itself.
(6) Characteristics of the teacher.
(7) Atmosphere of the department.
(8) Attitude of the assistants.
(9) Location and size of room.
(10) Was the color scheme the best possible?
(11) Did it lack any essential furnishings?
(12) Could any furnishings have been removed to advantage?
(13) Were the pictures well chosen and well placed?
(14) Was the room neat and in good order?
(15) Was there a convenient place for the children's wraps? for supplies?
(16) Suggest any desirable changes in (*a*) the

room, (*b*) the furnishings, (*c*) the teaching force, (*d*) the general atmosphere.

2. Visit a week-day kindergarten and compare with a Beginners' department. Note (*a*) features that should be common to both; (*b*) features inappropriate to a short Sunday session.

LESSON III

THE CHILD IN THE ROOM

Machines or human beings—we must choose which we shall make of our children. If we are free to choose * * * we shall of course choose democracy.—Hugh Hartshorne, in *Childhood and Character.*

Children, teacher, a room—upon their relationship depends the conduct of the department.

When the room is supreme.—There are departments in which the room is supreme. This happens in two cases—where the appointments are so dainty that the children are constantly warned not to injure them, and when they are so poor that free movement and effective teaching are impossible. It matters little whether a child is told, "Don't touch, you might hurt it," or whether there is nothing pretty to touch. He grows equally cramped whether he is kept from stepping freely over a newly oiled floor, from hopping and crawling in impersonation of animal life, or whether a lack of floor space makes such action out of the question. He must not use colored chalk freely upon the new blackboard—which is almost worse than having no blackboard at all. The result is the same in either case—teacher and children bow down to environment. The equipment which was outlined in the last chapter will not have this effect, for there we let the needs of imaginary children dictate what it should be.

An autocracy.—There are departments in which the teacher and her assistants are supreme, and we have an autocracy. The room is well policed. Any child who is not good is dealt with in the circle or removed from it. Goodness in such a department means quiet and obedience. Spontaneity, either in speech or action, is repressed. These "good" children recite and listen and answer; they do not converse and suggest and question. They are there to "take the course," and "to receive instruction."

It is a rare teacher who has none of this autocratic spirit. It is a simple matter to lead suggestible children along the mental path of the teacher's choice. Just as she can overcome them by superior physical strength, so she can win out in a mental contest. "But we were not talking about new shoes," she can say, insistently, to a bold interrupter, "we were talking about feeding birds," which she continues to do to a dumb but listless audience. This type of teacher is satisfied when she has personally conducted her class along the section of the route apportioned to that hour. She regards it as her trip, and allows no wandering in attractive bypaths, chosen by the children.

Anarchy.—There are departments in which the children are supreme, and we have anarchy. The bugbear which usually leads to this is the fear on the teacher's part that the children will cease attending or will dislike her. It may be that she really desires order, but doesn't know how to get it. The result is noise, confusion, weariness on the part of both leader

and children, and nothing accomplished—not even a happy time, for license never means happiness. Such a department depends upon songs, marches, and pictures to catch the attention or to drown out the noise. Stories are shortened to their least possible length, and told even then with interruptions and lack of attention.

A democracy.—The ideal department is a democracy, in which the teacher is guided by the children, and they, in turn, by her. Just as the president of a true democracy listens to the voice of the people, so this teacher keeps close to her children, that she may satisfy their needs. And as a great president leads the people on, because he sees farther than they, so the wise teacher leads as well as follows.

There are certain social laws that the children must learn are necessary wherever people meet together. One is respect for the rights of others. John will have to curb his desire to tell every story and answer every question, and give way to somebody else. Each child must wait his turn at the blackboard. One must often sing another child's favorite song. If all talk at once, nobody is listened to. Teasing another child is regarded with disapproval, not alone by the teacher but by the children. So is interrupting a story. In groups of little children, as truly as in any community, there is public opinion. The teacher is the personality that molds it, but each child is influenced fully as much by the frown or favor of his classmates as by her.

John refuses to join in following an imaginary pil-

lar of cloud, and is left alone in the circle, while the others wind about the room. He is ignored and forgotten. If he had refused because of shyness, he would rejoice, but his motive was rather a desire for prominence, a wish to be independent and different. To his dismay he has lost favor with the crowd, and he leaves his seat and joins the others.

Sarah is officiously attentive to the small child next her. The child resents this, and she finds her neighborhood shunned by the younger children.

Janet breaks into the story with an experience of her own, utterly unrelated, which is promptly cut short by the teacher. She is disappointed in finding no sympathy in the faces of the children, but instead impatience and annoyance that she should interrupt a tale they wished to hear.

Sharing ideals.—The department, little by little, comes to share the teacher's ideals, as the teacher, little by little, has discovered what ideals are possible for children of four and five. The difficulty of maintaining these ideals comes from the new children who are constantly entering, without any experience in adapting themselves to a group, and, toward a year's close, from those just ready to leave, whose sense of new powers makes them feel superior to common laws.

Directed freedom is what we want in our Beginners' classes. It means on the teacher's part sympathetic appreciation of the children's spontaneous acts and remarks, coupled with a sense of the needs of all children, which must not be thwarted by too great free-

dom on the part of any single child. It does not mean loss of individuality to have little attention paid to remarks or questions or acts that do not contribute to the interest of the whole class. It is a wholesome preparation for life.

Reverence.—There is another element entering into the atmosphere of the Beginners' room, which makes it unlike any other place to little children. This element is reverence. The sense of reverence occurs at other times and in other places, as at the bedtime prayer, during grace at meals, where hymns are sung at home, but it is peculiarly associated with this room. Each Sunday there are moments of prayer, a quiet hush, when all are thinking of God, thrills of wonder at his creations, the sense of his presence given by hymns. His part in human affairs is shown through Bible stories. The spirit of worship is induced through pictures. The realization of God's Fatherhood is keen as the children represent in play the outdoor life safe in his keeping.

Reverence means neither solemnity nor restraint. A spirit of abandon insures it more surely than a spirit of reserve. The teacher is reverent who opens her heart to the gladness and wonder and charm of God's world. Her children catch her attitude and "let themselves go," reveling in God's sunshine, participating through play in God's creations, enumerating happily and enthusiastically gifts from his hand—the new shoes which are their pride, or the Sunday school which is

their anticipation. Did you ever experience the delighted interest that comes when little children examine a bird's nest, made by God's birds without hands? That is reverence. Did you ever gather about a Thanksgiving gift of vegetables and fruits and enthuse over the colors, telling which one you brought, lifting some and smelling others, and bow your head in appreciation of the power that can make a big pumpkin and a tiny cranberry? That is reverence. Did you ever catch the spirit of worship from a worshipful picture and then sing a prayer-song? That is reverence. Did you ever wonder where the fragrance of a lily comes from, or how stars could be hung so high? That is reverence. Did you ever, on the completion of a fascinating Bible story, hold the Bible, saying, "The stories about God are here," and watch the children's expression? That is reverence. Did you ever call the children close to you, after a story of God's care, and whisper to each child the name of the One who cares, and watch their faces as they hear the words "heavenly Father"? That is reverence.

The teacher's attitude.—The child's behavior in the room depends to a large extent upon the respect paid him by his teacher. Watch many a teacher's attitude toward a little child and you will see how much surer he is of kindly patronage than of the respect he craves. He feels instinctively that he is entitled to respect, even though he is small. His trust is won by the teacher who treats him with the same courtesy she would show an adult, who recognizes his individuality

and pays attention to his opinion. And whom a child trusts he obeys and follows.

The teacher who respects a child is the one who encourages initiative and originality. Her idea of good behavior is not passivity, either mental or physical. When she discovers the ability to invent she does everything in her power to allow this free scope. When she finds the tendency to suggest a new line of thought or fresh play, she gladly follows the lead. This gives an indescribable sense of stimulation to the creative child or the child with the qualities of leadership.

Children, teacher, a room—after all, it is the teacher who makes of any room a prison or a place of free, spontaneous, joyous growth.

Questions

1. Describe a Beginners' Department in which (*a*) the room is most prominent, (*b*) the teacher rules, (*c*) the children are supreme, (*d*) ideal conditions.
2. What social laws must the children obey?
3. Give your idea of what directed freedom is.
4. How can children be reverent?
5. Describe the ideal teacher's attitude (*a*) of respect to the children, (*b*) of encouragement to children's initiative.

LESSON IV

MATERIALS FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The main thing for us as students of child psychology to bear in mind is that children have a religious nature. To ignore it is to deprive them of some of their inheritance—after all, the most important part. But the fact that children have by nature a religious impulse is no reason to suppose that they will grow religious, or that they will necessarily have any conscious religious experience or realization of God. This tendency needs developing, pruning, directing, feeding, just as any other does.—Norsworthy and Whitley, in *The Psychology of Childhood.*

A little child's religion.—The reason for the organization and equipment outlined in the first two chapters is the religious nurture of little children. "Religious nurture" is a phrase we glibly use. Exactly what do we mean by it? We mean something that can be so simply stated we are in danger of failing to realize its profundity. Religious nurture is making little children conscious of God and desirous of being good.

We might go further and say that it is opening up to little children fullness of life, because only that life is complete which includes God; that it is assisting them in the task to which they are born—the task of discovering God; that it is the answer to their natural questionings about the cause and origin of things; that it is initiating them into "the practice of the presence of God."

Nuture means promoting growth, and religious as well as physical growth depends upon food. The food upon which little children's spiritual nature will flourish must be interesting and concrete, and will usually take the form of stories. These will be stories interpreting their life, or capable of arousing a desirable feeling, or embodying a religious truth.

Arrangement of stories.—The stories will naturally be arranged in some order. With children four and five years old it is immaterial whether or not this order is chronological. It is important that the stories shall fit into the course of the year, in which Thanksgiving and Christmas are high lights, and the course of the seasons, which are a never-ceasing delight. Thus festival days and seasons will be interpreted through stories.

Thanksgiving and Christmas stories.—Thanksgiving and Christmas determine the stories for November and December. The entire month of December can be filled with stories about giving or the baby Jesus. This is done in the Beginners' Course of the International Graded Lessons,[1] which is a departmental course of one hundred and four lessons. Each December the same stories occur. The old idea was to save the story of Jesus' birth for Christmas Sunday. The new idea is to tell this early in the month, so that it will explain Christmas and arouse the Christmas spirit. Observe how Thanksgiving comes as a climax

1 Outlines can be obtained from denominational publishing houses.

to stories about God's care and people who gave thanks for it, and how this long preparation gives an understanding to the Thanksgiving season. Thus two red-letter days of a child's year are made the basis of his religious education. How different from forcing upon him a scheme of lessons utterly unrelated to his interests!

Examine in your outline of the International Beginners' Course the stories that find their climax in Thanksgiving and notice the series of Christmas stories.

Nature interpreted.—Then again, the procession of the seasons offers the best possible opportunities for answering those questions about the cause of outdoor happenings that children constantly ask.

"See the feathers! Who is shaking a pillow?" a child asks when the snow falls.

"Who's turned the faucet?" another child inquires when the rain pours down. "Who is pulling the sun down behind the hills?" "Lift me up high, so I can see the wind." "Who painted the rainbow? Who could get up so high?" Thus query little children, and it is a significant fact that they never ask "What?" but "Who?"—which proves their search for a personality. It is very satisfying to point out God as the great Cause of all these natural events. Through wind and storm, through flower and insect, through morning sun and evening star, through bird and beast, the great discovery is made that behind everything that is, is God.

Think of nature happenings that seem to you to be of particular interest to little children, and see if they are made use of in the Beginners' Course you are examining.

Worship.—Consciousness of God and love for him will not persist without some expression in prayer or praise. Stories that make communion with God a natural and frequent act, and songs in his praise a delight, help to form a habit of worship in which little children show charming naiveté and sincerity. Examine the course for stories of this character.

Coworkers with God.—Children early show a wish to exercise their own powers, not so much to assist others as to prove their ability to do so. Thus there comes to be another relationship to their parents besides that of dependence—helpfulness. This same relationship should exist between the heavenly Father and little children. Many a winter bird will die unless it receives food from a child's hand. Garden flowers require more frequent watering than the rain gives. Animal pets are dependent for food and shelter upon their owners. Even the happiness of the people God creates depends upon their helpfulness to one another. Children respond heartily to this appeal, heartily and with startling self-confidence. "I could make a tree grow; I'm pretty strong," said Harold. Then, as a concession, "If God just started it."

It therefore seems quite necessary that in the material for a child's religious education there should be groups of stories upon the children's part as coworkers

with God. Examine the course under consideration, and mark any such groups.

Stories about Jesus.—The whole of religion for man or child is summed up in the two great commandments—"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind"; "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

This second commandment finds its perfect illustration in the life of the Lord Jesus. Not alone are the stories of his childhood fascinating to little children. His deeds of kindness and mercy find a responsive chord in their hearts. They do not wonder at his power, when grown to manhood, but delight that he should make sick people well, and children welcome; that he should feed a supperless multitude, and still a storm.

Pick out the incidents in Jesus' life you would select for little children, and see if they have a place in the Beginners' Course.

Stories of kindness and helpfulness.—Stories of Jesus are not the only incentives to helpful kindness needed by little children. They find closer parallels to their own lives in incidents of people who show tender sympathy and practical help. Nor need these people necessarily be children. Look over the course for such stories, and notice how they are grouped.

Stories of family relationships.—In *The Psychology of Childhood,* by Norsworthy and Whitley, it is said that "one of the chief moral habits needed at this age is obedience." This habit is gained largely at

home, and may be called in the beginning a relationship between parent and child. Examine the course to find stories illustrating obedience.

Many other qualities besides obedience enter into a happy family life. Examine the course for stories of kindness and the opposite in family life, unselfishness, hospitality, and loving service.

Children like to see the reflection of their own activities in nature. Do you find any such analogies of family life in nature in these stories?

Interpretation of Easter.—For little children the Easter message of life after death is not gained through the resurrection story. The story of nature's awakening after the winter's sleep is a preparation for the thought of continued life in heaven. "There are no dead," is Tyltyl's conclusion in "The Bluebird." It is the conclusion we covet for the little child, whose instinctive belief is in eternal life. The story of Jesus preparing a home of marvelous charm gives a little child a sense of pleasant anticipation.

Story themes and repeated stories.—Write out the story themes in order, and decide whether this is an effective outline of a curriculum, thinking always of the child as he is and the religion he needs.

Find out the proportion of Bible and nature stories, and how many lessons are reserved for old stories to be retold. The course is distinguished for its repetition of familiar tales.

Bible verses.—Notice the number and kind of Bible verses that are given for use with the children.

Count them, write them down, and consider how many are of assistance in children's religious nurture, as prayers, or to clarify the themes by frequent use.

The aim.—The wording of the aim unfortunately gives an impression of theological complexity which is unwarranted by the simple lessons. Reduced to its simplest terms it means realization of God's care, friendship with Jesus, a picture of the home in heaven, and a little child's part in the world's work.

Compare this with the expressed aim of another course, and decide whether this course includes the same teaching: "To guide the pupil's thought, feeling and conduct in his human relations in the family, at school, at play and elsewhere, emphasizing most of all ideal relationships in the family life, so that he will begin to realize himself as a member of God's family."

General plans.—This Beginners' Course is part of a system of lessons that is graded by years. It differs from the courses that follow in providing lessons for a department not divided into grades, and so it is correctly termed a departmental course. All children in the department, whether four or five years old, are taught the same lesson, whose theme is so interwoven into the informal program that any more complicated plan would lead to confusion. There are one hundred and four of these lessons, which cover the period a child spends in the department. They begin in October and are closely connected with the seasons.

Sources of stories.—The stories of this course are from the Bible, with the exception of the nature

stories, and these are nearly all founded upon verses in which the Hebrews sought God through his creations. Louise Seymour Houghton has paid a wonderful tribute to the efficacy of Bible stories in little children's religious education. And because no teacher should underrate their value, a quotation from her *Telling Bible Stories* is given as a close to this lesson:

"The relations with God which we find mirrored in the Old Testament stories are the relations of a child people with their heavenly Father; they do appeal to the child; they awaken in him a response, not of the affections only, but of the intellect; they are an adequate and a compelling force to lead him, while yet a little child, into like personal relations with God. And the child to whom the sense of God early becomes second nature can no more lose it than he can lose the art of walking or of other acquired habits which have become spontaneous."

Questions

In this lesson suggestions for study of a particular Beginners' Course occur under the sections. A further test for this, or any other course of lessons, may be found in the following questions, based upon the needs of a little child's nature:

1. Are there stories that will quiet unreasoning fear and give a sense of trust?
2. What stories appeal because of a child's helplessness and need of care?
3. Name stories satisfying a child's curiosity.

4. Name those which will be an incentive to activity.

5. What stories appeal because of a child's natural affection?

6. Will all the stories produce happy associations with religious ideas?

LESSON V

BUILDING A PROGRAM

A child's maturity, his experience, his interests and ideals, his habits, his knowledge determine his growth and interpretation in religion and morals just as surely as they do in arithmetic and literature.—Norsworthy and Whitley, in *The Psychology of Childhood.*

Good proportion of parts.—"Building a program" is a good phrase, for it implies that a program is made with its parts properly proportioned to one another. It is this matter of proportion which distinguishes a specimen of good architecture, and also its adaptation to the use for which it is designed. So with one's program for the Beginners' Department.

A program that fails usually does so because of the disproportion of its part, and the explanation may be found in a teacher's capacity or preference. When she excells as as a story-teller, she is likely to crowd in an extra story. If working with materials appeals to her, handwork occupies a large place. She may be musical, and her children will sing frequently; or dramatic, and the possibilities of play will loom large. She may wish, above anything else, to cultivate the missionary spirit, and try to do so by a prolonged offering service. She may be impressed with the desirability of good-fellowship, and stress the welcome. In any such case she needs to proportion her program and

make it serve the children rather than her own inclination.

A plastic program.—Another preliminary word needs to be said in regard to the program. It is fatal to the spirit of freedom unless it is plastic, while freedom is equally endangered from a session with no program. It may seem paradoxical to suggest that a program should be built with painstaking care, and yet be subject to change. This is because the children for whom it is arranged constitute an unknown quantity, and their response may alter it. The program that is well planned and thoroughly in the teacher's mind is the one which can be easily lengthened in one part and shortened in another.

The five purposes.—The program has five distinct purposes—to create a sense of good-fellowship and intimacy, to afford opportunity for worship, to call forth the children's ideas, to present new thoughts, and to give scope for expression on their part.

The first is accomplished by greetings, the second by prayer and song, the third is provided for in the circle talk, the fourth in the story period, and the fifth through the offering, play, and handwork.

The greetings.—Consider first what is often called the "fellowship service." This actually begins in the welcome given at the door, as the children arrive and their wraps are removed. It must have in addition a distinct place in the program, when all are seated in the circle. It should never be omitted, but should usually be shortened. It is a fallacy to consider length

necessary for effectiveness. A short welcoming song repeated many times is better than a long one. Two or more children may pass about the circle shaking hands, while this is sung again and again. It is delightful to be welcomed individually, if one has been absent for several Sundays, but almost as satisfactory to form one of a group of recent absentees. To be greeted as a newcomer is a pleasure if one is not shy, but torture if one is. Every child enjoys occasionally turning to mothers and visitors and shaking hands or singing a welcome; but if this occurs every Sunday, it loses the charm of novelty.

A birthday must never be forgotten, but its recognition need take little time. A special birthday chair, or one's chair decorated with a ribbon bow, is an honor every child covets. A star or other design stuck on a birthday calendar, the welcome song sung to the birthday child, and his pennies dropped into the birthday bank form a simple and satisfactory celebration.

The same warning is needed for a Cradle Roll admittance service. The program is planned for children four and five, and they are not interested in a long, sentimental song and lengthy prayer about babies. They do like to hear of the baby brothers and sisters who will one day come to the church school, and will give interesting items concerning them, and join in a tiny prayer or song about them.

The entire greeting section should be condensed into five or six minutes and often less. The occasions for an extension of this part of the program would be an

unusual number of birthdays. It is advisable to admit Cradle Roll babies monthly, or upon Sundays when there are no birthdays to celebrate.

Opening music and prayer.—Previous to this greeting service there will usually be music to call attention to the opening of the session, or to quiet the children, or to awaken interest. A common custom is to play the tune of a new song, which may then be sung with the syllable "la" or "loo."

A natural climax to the greetings is the recognition of God's presence. A simple prayer, sung or spoken, furnishes the key-note for the hour.

The offering service.—The offering service will follow. The offering itself is often taken at the door, to prevent the annoyance of dropped pennies. A better method is to collect them after the children are seated, as otherwise they have been known to regard this as entrance money. In any case there will be an offering service, which usually will be a brief mention of its purpose, and sometimes an offering song, a march or a prayer. This is a section of the program that will be expanded at certain times, the Christmas season notably. Suppose we plan for approximately five minutes for this section.

The circle talk.—We then come to the circle talk, to which belongs the major part of the hour, because it allows for the children's response, and for the greatest freedom on their part. Its varied features will be treated at length in Lesson XI. A full twenty min-

utes should be allowed for it, and often it will need extension to twenty-five minutes or half an hour.

The rest period.—To insure the effectiveness of the story period, which follows and forms the climax of the hour, it must be preceded by some physical movements. These may be provided for in a three- to five-minute rest period. They will more often come in naturally as play at the end of the circle talk. A place is made for this in the program, lest it be forgotten.

The story period and dismissal.—The story period will occupy from ten to fifteen minutes, including a possible preparation for the story, the story itself, observation of the picture, and a prayer or song.

Last comes the distribution of the papers, putting on the wraps, a good-by song, and an orderly dismissal, taking from eight to ten minutes. Our finished program will read, then, like this:

Quiet music Greetings	7 minutes.
Opening Prayer Offering	8 minutes.
Circle Talk	22 minutes.
Rest Period	3 minutes.
Story Period	12 minutes.
Dismissal	8 minutes.
Total	60 minutes.

Pre-session activities.—In schools that are held in the morning or afternoon some children arrive

early, and there is usually quite a group waiting for the beginning of the session—and not waiting idly! This time can be made interesting by having on a table objects of nature, mounted pictures, scrapbooks and blocks which are seasonal, or related to the day's theme. A teacher should be present, but the children left free to look at any material that attracts them. They will enjoy taking small, mounted pictures from a box and will sometimes arrange them in a story sequence.

This use of materials will not only keep the early comers out of mischief; it will accomplish something far more constructive. The children will come to the class with ideas that fit into the theme and form a real preparation for the lesson.

Program as a whole.—Think now of the program as a whole. The quiet music that opens the session calls together children whose interest is already awakened in the lesson theme, and others upon whom the influence of the attractive surroundings has a subtle effect. The greetings give a sense of happy fellowship. God's presence is recognized in the opening prayer. Through the offering others less fortunate are included in the thought. The circle talk seems to the children a delightful opportunity to talk, to sing, to play, to enjoy again last week's story, to draw, to pick out objects in pictures, to handle flowers, shells, and birds' nests. They do not realize that in its variety there has been a unity of thought that makes the lesson theme intensely vital. Neither do they

know that the play that precedes the story is fitting their bodies to be quiet during it. This story is the climax of their thinking, which is intensified by prayer or song or verse. Receiving leaflets which contain that story, and perhaps their new song and the Bible verse, gives pleasant anticipation of a continuation of the lesson in their own homes, to which they now go.

Questions

1. What are the elements of a good program?
2. Is it ever allowable to change a well planned program?
3. Name the five distinctive purposes of a program.
4. Consider what parts of the program achieve these purposes.
5. Write out a program, approximately timed.

Problems for Discussion

A. Show how at the Christmas giving season one should extend one part of the program and cut out others.

B. Make over the program to allow for a Sunday after vacation, when many greetings are essential.

C. Make over the program to allow for two old stories to be retold, at the children's request.

D. Change a program on service to allow for some actual service to be performed after the story.

Assignmnet for Observation

Observe a Beginners' session. Criticize the program from the standpoint of (*a*) proportion, (*b*) effectiveness, (*c*) adaptation to the children's response.

Leave your notebook at home, but make notes immediately on your return. The following questions will help you to make a critical analysis:

(1) What impressed me as the most prominent features of the program? Was there any part I should like to have lengthened? shortened?

(2) Was there real worship? effectiveness in the use of Bible verses? joy in the songs? interest in the story? Where effectiveness was lost, was there a reason?

(3) Did the children's remarks influence the program? Were they allowed to exercise initiative? Where they failed to respond, was an effort made to win their interest? Was the general effect that of a program induced by the children's attitude, or one forced upon them by the teacher?

LESSON VI

WORSHIP AND PRAYER

Prayer is not merely "asking for things," even though that asking be for help in his efforts to be good, and for God's blessing upon those he loves. Prayer is communion with an unseen Father; and when the child prays, that which matters most is his attitude toward God, and not the form of his petitions.—Edith E. Read Mumford, in *The Dawn of Religion in the Mind of the Child.*

Little children's worship.—A teacher of little children realizes how natural and sincere their worship is, and often learns through them to strip her own prayers of the formality that overlays them. A child's worship may be considered in its three phases—speaking to God in words, sung or spoken; reverent but unexpressed feeling; and the wonder that is usually aroused through God's creations.

Worship is peculiarly dependent upon atmosphere. The appointments of the room, which have been discussed, do much toward creating this atmosphere; so does an unobtrusive yet efficient organization. Most important of all is the attitude of the teacher and assistants.

The opening prayer.—In our program we put an opening prayer after the welcome song. A recognition of God's presence naturally follows the greetings to one another, to children made important by recent birthdays and to new members, and the references to

absent ones and to babies who will some day come to the church school. This prayer is repeated or sung. Usually the same one is used, and the familiar words and music may in themselves produce a worshipful spirit.

Preparation for prayer.—The teacher sometimes feels that further preparation is needed. She leads her children to a picture—"The Angelus," or "The Child Samuel," or a modern child at prayer. She speaks of the postures of the man and woman in "The Angelus," as an example for one's attitude during prayers, or she simply bows her own head and closes her eyes, or she suggests that this be done. A song certain to bring about a reverent frame of mind is the following:

"This is God's house and he is here to-day;
He hears each song of praise and listens while we pray."[1]

Possibly the desired atmosphere comes through a reference to the outdoor world, to the sunshine sent by God, to the wonder of the snow, to the need for his rain.

Rote prayers.—The important thing for the teacher to remember is that a familiar prayer said by rote is in danger of becoming a mere form. This is not the only place in the program where prayers are said or sung. They may come anywhere in the circle talk. They frequently follow the story. There is sometimes a closing prayer. They will come whenever

[1] From *Songs for Little People*, the Pilgrim Press.

there is the impulse to pray—and the impulse to pray will depend upon the degree of consciousness of God which prevails. Rote prayers must be very simple in thought and expression, and if sung the music should be reverent and simple. One of the most common is this:

"Father, we thank thee for the night,
And for the pleasant morning light,
For rest and food and daily care,
And all that makes the world so fair!"[2]

Another childlike prayer-song is the following:

"Father in heaven, we pray to thee
That good children we may be."[3]

Bible verse prayers.—When the Bible verses suggested with the lessons are prayers, they should be used as such, and never by any chance as recitations. Such verses are,—"Thou hast made summer and winter"; "The day is thine, the night also is thine"; "Thou, Lord, hast made me glad"; "Help me, O Lord my God." The first two express a child's consciousness of God the Creator, and the last two a child's appreciation of the Author of his happiness and his help in trouble. They frequently are exactly the words needed. Bible verses that form a good prelude to prayer, thanksgiving and praise are, "Lord, teach us to pray"; "I will give thanks unto the Lord"; "Let us sing unto the Lord."

2 From *Songs and Games for Little Ones*, Oliver Ditson Co.
3 From *The Children's Year*, Milton Bradley Co.

Spontaneous prayers.—However, little children pray otherwise than in words learned by heart, and their spontaneous prayers are very real worship. We all know of original requests added by children to their bedtime petition, "God bless mother and daddy." The atmosphere at the Beginners' session ought to be so homelike that a similar thing happens. The teacher follows a talk or song or story about God's care by saying, "Let's bow our heads and tell the heavenly Father things we are glad for. Dear heavenly Father, I am glad for the eggs I had for breakfast, and John is glad for—(my new shoes) and Mary is glad for—(candy) and Sarah is glad for—(ice-cream)." A long list follows, usually of material comforts, though a child may speak of his mother or a new baby brother or a toy.

Another way to get the children's coöperation in prayer is to pause and let any child who wishes name something he is glad about. The objects for thanks may be named in the circle, with eyes open, and the prayer of thanks come at the close. This may be the chorus of "Can a Little Child like Me."[4]

"Father, we thank thee,
Father, we thank thee,
Father in heaven, we thank thee."

Or a very simple song like the following:

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4 From *Laudes Domini for the Sunday School* or *Songs for Little People.*

"We thank the heavenly Father,
We thank the heavenly Father,
We thank the heavenly Father, kind and good!"[5]

When teachers and children are conscious of God's presence informal prayer is natural and frequent. In the midst of interesting conversation they stop and "tell the heavenly Father about it." The weather leads them to express their happiness, or a home experience in which they see his hand, or new wearing apparel. "I am glad," or, "It makes me happy," states a child's appreciation better than, "I am thankful."

Under worshipful conditions little children readily fall in with a suggestion to appeal to the heavenly Father for help to be good, or to enumerate the things that makes them glad, or to make a confidant of him.

Prayer and play.—Prayer follows play very naturally. This will seem odd only to one not in close sympathy with little children. Play as used in the Beginners' class is impersonation, frequently of creatures and objects of the outdoor world. This in itself brings to mind their Creator. But that is not the chief reason why play is closely akin to prayer. It is, rather, because both are natural expressions of child nature. The imagination that can transform a child into a bird easily pictures an invisible Father of both bird and child. A nature that has expanded, through feeling and acting as

5 From *Object Lessons for the Cradle Roll*, the Pilgrim Press.

something outside itself feels and acts, finds it somehow easier to realize God.

Worship unexpressed.—Words are not the only evidence of worship. Little children often worship dumbly. A story of God's protection told thrillingly fills them with a sense of his part in the world. They feel his love. A hymn sung by the teacher, or soft, reverential chords arouse in a musical child the worshipful spirit. A picture with the worshipful feeling impresses another child in the same way. Children's eyes more often than their lips tell us that they are worshiping.

The worship of wonder.—Closely akin to this is the wonder every child shows at some object of nature that to adults has become commonplace. It may be falling snowflakes seen from the window, or the mystery of the wind bending trees and flattening grass, or a flower that is touched and smelled, or tiny green leaves that have come magically from seeds once planted. The wonder, expressed or unexpressed, is, "How *could* God?" the answer, "But he did." There is reality in the worship of wonder that is often lost in formal prayer. The sympathetic teacher feels this as she learns from the child to look up to One who can hang stars in space and perfume a lily with fragrance that can neither be seen nor used up.

Betsey's first prayer.—The following description is of a child's spontaneous prayer, told by her father:

Betsey was only two years old but already her

mother had taught her the evening prayer of childhood,—

"Now I lay me down to sleep,
I pray thee, Lord, my soul to keep.
Thy love go with me through the night,
And wake me with the morning light."

This prayer she said every night—sometimes rapidly, sometimes slowly, often hilariously—for what could it mean to her? God was only a name, and so the beautiful little prayer which, when understood, is cherished as one of the precious associations of childhood, was simply falling from her lips as a mental exercise. She had not learned to pray.

But one evening in the early winter, when night falls at the children's bedtime, she saw the evening star. With awe and wonder and curiosity she watched it in the sky.

"Can I take it in my hands?" she said. "How does it get up there?"

"God put it there," she was told.

"How does he put it there?"

And then began the child's first real teaching about God, and then came her first real prayer: "Thank you, God, for putting the little stars in the sky."

After this nearly every winter evening found Betsey and me at the window, seeking God through his stars. I taught her the little poem of worship:

"Twinkle, twinkle, little star,
How I wonder what you are,
Up above the world so high,
Like a diamond in the sky!"

There would be a pause after the last line, and then she would usually thank God in her own words for the little stars, or "little lamps," in the sky.

The reality of those prayers, in contrast to the meaningless repetition of that learned by rote, convinced me that the path from nature to God is very direct for a little child—perhaps the only possible path for feet so easily lost in one more circuitous.

Questions

1. In what three ways do little children worship?
2. Tell how a worshipful spirit may be induced for the opening prayer.
3. Name other parts of the program in which prayers or song-prayers may occur.
4. Give Bible prayer verses.
5. Suggest when informal prayers may be used.
6. What connection do you see between play and prayer?
7. What will induce reverent feeling?
8. Explain the worship of wonder.

Problems for Discussion

A. The wisdom of suggesting prayers for stated material objects.

B. A teacher saw that none of her children had

closed their eyes throughout a prayer. Where was the trouble?

C. A teacher's best preparation for making her children worshipful.

Assignment for Observation

Do not spoil the atmosphere of worship by an over-critical attitude.

1. Compare evidences of the worshipful spirit in rote and spontaneous prayers.
2. Watch for a swift transition from play to prayer.
3. Is worship frequent and informal?
4. Look for the worship of wonder.
5. Suggest a remedy for any lack of a worshipful atmosphere.

LESSON VII

MUSIC

A child is capable of religious feeling long before he is capable of religious thought. Various influences combine to strengthen this feeling. When, on Sundays, he and his mother listen to the solemn pealing of the organ outside the church door; or when, in the evening, she plays to him in the soft twilight—again and again the sacred music arouses and deepens within him the same quiet sense of awe which he experiences each night when his mother prays.—Edith A. Read Mumford, in *The Dawn of Religion in the Mind of the Child.*

Limited use.—The value of music is so universally accepted that the danger lies in too free use of it in the Beginners' Department. In making out a program it is a simple matter to indicate songs, old and new, that illustrate the points and will be, supposedly, sung with enthusiasm. The actual fact is that little children thoroughly enjoy only familiar songs, and very few can be familiar to children who come together but once a week for an hour, with many days between in which to forget.

There is one way in which a greater variety of songs may be used than the children can learn, and that is by having one occasionally sung by the teacher and her assistants. It takes no great musical ability to do this. Anyone who can carry a tune and takes pains to enunciate clearly satisfies the children. A story may be sung as well as told, and music gives pleasure when one merely listens to it.

Even this should not be overdone. A Beginners' session is not a musical program, and only as many songs should occur as the children can absorb. The word "absorb" is used advisedly, to indicate that transfusion into one's being which takes place when a song or a story is truly effective. One song repeated an indefinite number of times does not mean monotony to a little child, nor to a sympathetic teacher.

Songs repeated.—One instance is the refrain spoken of in the last lesson, sung as various reasons for thanks are named. Other songs, applicable to many common experiences in a child's life, and so coming in appropriately during the progress of the circle talk, are the following:

"Happy as a robin,
Gentle as a dove,
That's the sort of little child
Every one will love."[1]—*Emilie Poulsson.*

HAPPY THOUGHT[2]

"The world is so full of a number of things,
I'm sure we should all be as happy as kings."
—*Stevenson.*

A THOUGHT[2]

"It is very nice to think
The world is full of meat and drink,
With little children saying grace,
In every Christian kind of place."
—*Stevenson.*

1 From *In the Child's World,* Milton Bradley Company. Music in *Songs for Little People,* The Pilgrim Press.
2 From *A Child's Garden of Verses,* Charles Scribner's Sons. Music in *Songs for Little People.*

One of the songs that can be repeated with slight variations is this:

"Father in heaven, I'm glad as can be
For the good milkman who's working for me."[3]

The policeman, postman, fireman, and carpenter each have a verse in the song, and the children often elect other workmen to be sung about. The signal to stop this song usually comes from the teacher, as the children find it fascinating. Its mission is accomplished if it fills the children with enthusiasm over those who work for them.

Songs of one verse and for single occasions.—Songs of but one verse are preferable, and are becoming more and more common. This is particularly the case with a seasonal song, or one of only passing value.

It is rarely worth while to teach a song for a single occasion, such as New Year, for example. It is far better to change the words "New Year" to the Christmas greeting, or on both occasions utilize the familiar "Good morning to you" as a seasonal greeting. The same tune can carry birthday wishes as well.

A repertoire.—Let us think out a well-chosen repertoire for our department. There will be the single greeting, adapted to various occasions, the opening prayer-song, familiar to all, because it is sung every Sunday, and a short seasonal song. Then there should be some expression of gratitude so simply

3 From *The Little Child and the Heavenly Father.*

phrased that it can be sung by all frequently, and a good-by song, coming also each week.

These are songs reduced to their lowest terms. Besides, there probably will be various songs interpreting the themes, as they come along, frequently, as was suggested, sung by the teacher alone. There are, of course, other endless possibilities—a Cradle-Roll song, giving song, Bible verses set to music, and numerous songs illustrating the thought of the hour. Regard most of these as temptations, and preserve the joy that simplicity gives little children.

Quality of songs.—The best is none too good even for Beginners. The best means words and music of good musical and literary quality. The best also means music that is rhythmic and within the compass of a little child's voice, and words simple as well as beautiful.

The limited number of songs possible for a Beginners' Department makes it most desirable that each one shall be well worth including.

Music without words.—Music without words has its place in the Beginners' Department. A few chords are wonderfully quieting. A happy little tune arouses interest. The tune of a familiar hymn gives a feeling of reverence. Music, too, often accompanies play, and helps the stream to tinkle as it winds, and birds to hop, and trees to sway, and child-carpenters to pound briskly, and child-mothers to quiet babies. In any such use of music it is important that there shall be no thought of a drill or doing things well to music.

The music is used merely to intensify the play spirit.

The purpose of songs.—We are more likely to use songs with discrimination if we appreciate their purpose. This is chiefly to arouse or increase feeling. The psychological moment for a song of thanks is after, not before, God's gifts have been mentioned in conversation or story. An alert teacher will suggest a bright song when the children are listless. She, or the pianist, will be quick to perceive when conversation or story-telling or play or handwork are losing their effectiveness, and a song will best continue the thought. So it comes about that songs cannot be put into the program didactically, but being primarily an expression of feeling, must depend upon the development of feeling.

Thus songs are distributed through the program rather than used at the beginning and close, as in higher departments. The continuous session, without separating into classes, makes this possible.

Methods of teaching songs.—The same conception of the purpose of songs will influence methods of teaching them. Words that are to be used in expressing emotions must be learned joyously and understandingly. The simplest songs will be "absorbed" without any drill. Teachers are too ready to "snub nature," as some one puts it. Often a song with words so simple as to need no explanation is learned through imitation. Sing and sing and sing, with pictures, conversation or objects, to make interesting and clear what you are singing about, and soon childish voices

will join. The children may need to be encouraged to try, but that is all.

A song taught.—Less simple songs need explanation and teaching. This may be done mechanically, line by line, for example:

"Now, children, say this after me:

'Blooming clover blossoms.'

"'*Blooming*' is the word—say it. Now the whole line. Now the next:

'Fresh and fair to see!'

"Say this after me. Everybody! I didn't hear Ruth. Now the two lines, and don't forget the 'b-loom-ing'," etc. This is an extreme example of drill on mere words. Suppose instead a bunch of clover blossoms is examined by the children and the teacher says quite naturally:

"'Blooming clover blossoms,[1]
Fresh and fair to see.'

"Mary may hold them while we talk to them:

"'Blooming clover blossoms,
Fresh and fair to see.'

"I am going right up to Mary and smell of the blooming clover blossoms and talk to them.

"'Blooming clover blossoms,
Fresh and fair to see.'

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[1] From *Song Echoes from Child Life,* Oliver Ditson Company.

"Who else wants to? Who else? Shall we all go? Clover blossoms have other visitors besides children. They are bees that buzz and go after honey. Each child may go to one of us teachers and let us show you where the bees find the honey.

"Go back to your seats and I will tell the blooming blossoms something else.

" 'While you live, you can give
Honey to the bees.'

"Let's all tell them—again, again.

"I shouldn't want to step on them and crush them in the fields, should you? Show me how carefully you would step in a field of blooming clover blossoms, Carolyn.

" 'And we will not crush you
Underneath our feet,
While we go to and fro,
Through the fields so sweet.'

"Let's tell them the rest of the story. Let's tell them all about it. I will pick out some red clover blossoms. You may grow here, Mollie, and John here, and Sarah here. Let's tell these children-clover blossoms the first of the story.

" 'Blooming clover blossoms,
Fresh and fair to see,
While you live, you can give
Honey to the bee.'

"Let's choose some bees to buzz and hum and get honey. Let's walk through the fields and be careful, and tell the rest of the story.

"Now I'll sing it to the little tune we hummed last Sunday, and Miss Brown played while we were coming in. Sing with me. Let's sing it while we walk through the fields. Let's sing 'Buzz' to the tune. Let's be getting honey."

Little children's singing.—A group of little children will never sing correctly, but they will sing joyously, and that is all we desire. There will always be monotones, usually a last line rendered as a solo by a child who learns through repetition, and always some who enjoy through listening. These are the children who may hold the illustrative picture or object, or be active in interpretative play. Occasionally a musical child will sing a song alone, and the children's musical ability be tested by telling what songs the piano plays. They will delight in choosing favorite songs by whispering their choices to the pianist, or by showing or drawing pictures about their songs. If a child spontaneously suggests a song bearing on the subject, how satisfied a teacher feels that music is fulfilling its function for her children!

Questions

1. Give the least possible number of songs necessary for the Beginners' Department.
2. Show how one song may be repeated many times without monotony.

3. Explain how variety may be obtained without trying to teach more songs than children can learn.
4. What place has music without words?
5. What will decide the number of songs in the program?
6. Illustrate teaching poorly and well some other song than the one used as an example in this chapter.
7. Give your idea of the test of the function of music.

Problems for Discussion

A. The child who sings loudly his own words during a song.
B. The child who refuses to try to sing.
C. The child who sings a line behind the others.
D. How to insure the use of songs at home.

LESSON VIII

GIVING AND THE MISSIONARY SPIRIT

There must be a cooperative group-life in the class in which all participate as best they can. The children must find some enterprises which carry out in one way or another some truly Christian motive. The best condition is obtained when this enterprise is itself definite cooperation with others outside t he class, whether in the rest of the school or with some neighboring family, or with neglected or overfavored children, or with children of distant lands who are needed to enlarge the fellowship of the Beginners, and who also, it may be, need the loving help of our children.—Hugh Hartshorne, in *Childhood and Character.*

The offering.—A part of every Beginners' program is the offering. This often assumes undue importance in the eyes of a teacher or, perhaps we should say more truly, she puts the wrong emphasis on its importance. First, then, we must consider the use that is made of the money brought by the children.

In some cases all or part goes toward a fund for buying supplies. In other words, the children pay for the folders and story papers they take home, for the teachers' text-books, for the large pictures she uses in teaching, and occasionally for their share of the pleasures offered them by the school, such as the annual picnic and Christmas gifts. This is quite opposite from their experiences in public kindergarten, where the town buys all supplies through a system of taxation of all its property owners, parents or other-

wise. It bars out any honest comment upon the offering, any offering prayer or suggestions of generosity. It is a commercial transaction, paying for value received. In such cases there is usually an attempt at an additional or occasional offering that is actually a gift.

More enlightened churches adopt the policy of the public school, and tax their membership for supplies needed for the religious education of their children. This policy regards the offerings brought by the children as a means of awakening the missionary spirit, and of sharing the responsibility for certain church expenses. If this manner of financing the school is impossible, a group of people especially interested in little children's education may be secured to furnish their yearly supplies, or the teachers and parents may undertake this.

Giving to the church.—There is an important difference between buying their own educational supplies with their offerings and giving toward some definite church object. Even little children should feel some responsibility toward the up-keep of their room, perhaps giving the coal that heats it, each year adding something to its permanent equipment, and having a part in every great church-improvement enterprise, such as painting a door, or giving a certain number of bricks. Such giving is the prelude to regular adult giving to the church.

Gifts to outside causes.—Besides this there should be gifts to causes outside one's own church.

Just here lies our great danger of regarding our children as means to an immediate rather than a far-off end. Instead of planning in a statesmanlike way the best methods of arousing the missionary spirit, we are apt to make use of the children in the support of causes that appeal to us. The Beginners' Department is not organized as a philanthropic institution. It is for religious nurture. There is no religious education in taking the children's offering for causes in which they have not the slightest interest. This is exploitation, pure and simple. A discerning teacher terms this highway robbery, just as she calls using the offering to buy the supplies "turning Sunday school into a mere news-stand." By no stretch of the imagination can it be called an "offering."

Choosing the cause.—There are plenty of causes which will interest little children, but every cause must be tested from the standpoint of the child rather than the cause. "Is it capable of arousing the missionary spirit in children four and five?" we ask, for our task is far greater than to support a particular cause at a particular time. It is to *make missionaries*. It is to so direct and develop the inborn instinct of kindly feeling toward one's fellow men that one's wish is to share—food, clothes, money, pleasures, thoughts, friends,—everything that makes one happy. The habit of regular giving is a part of this large program, but the cause must be definite and appealing.

Gaining interest.—I can hear some teachers' mental comment, "Missionary instruction in the offering

service," and see a big hole in the program for this purpose. This is neither necessary nor wise. Leave customs of other lands and tales of people unlike us for higher departments. It is enough for the Beginners to know that there are children who haven't enough to eat or to keep warm—children far away or near by, it doesn't matter—just children like them. So they transform their pennies into food and clothes magically, as they drop them into the bank or basket.

"Mine is bread," the teacher says. "What is yours, Jack?" "Ice-cream," asserts Jack, with blissful unconsciousness of the purchasing power of one cent. "Mine is oranges," cries another. "Candy!" "Eggs!" "Chicken!" chorus the rest. It is a very real offering indeed when a little tin bank is crowded full of real food, and an entire wardrobe of suits and new shoes, hair ribbons and sweaters. The magic of play does it. Do you see how much more effectually than stories of customs and manners and tragedies? Next best to packing a market-basket for a local family is crowding a bank with play-food. At Christmas the money may go into tiny colored silk bags on a miniature tree, and by the touch of a child's finger each bag be changed into the things it will buy, so that the children see a wondrous Christmas tree from which hang bottles of milk, mittens, candy, caps, and cookies.

Community gifts.—Far-away children will not arouse the spirit of giving as much as those who can be really seen—the family to whom one takes the Christmas tree, hung with gifts bought with the pen-

nies; the children's hospital, that one passes on the way to the church school, for which a picture is bought; the Home where the yard swarms with children who do not know some Beginners are planning to buy gifts for them. Such near-by "causes" are very interesting, and can be made more so through play. The children play, for instance, that they are sick abed in a hospital and asleep. One child places the gift picture on the wall. They awake and exclaim over it, and the thrill of delight they experience makes giving very attractive.

Some of their money goes still nearer home—to their own sick classmates. This is the birthday money, which they put in a particular receptacle. They choose what the money shall buy—a tiny blossoming plant, a toy, a little book, a box of Japanese water-flowers, a big orange—and Monday the teacher does the buying and delivering. Nor does it dim the purity of a child's good-will to anticipate that sickness and a gift may some day be his portion!

Place in program.—A double offering, one for missionary enterprises and one for one's own church, with the birthday bank for class kindnesses, is feasible. Does it seem to you that this way of making giving interesting will use up more than the time for the offering given in our tentative program? It will, indeed, and not every Sunday will there be time for so much elaboration; but at Thanksgiving and Christmas and at certain other times of the year the use of the money will be made so vivid that the dropping of

pennies will always bring up a delightful sense of sharing with those in need, and the birthday pennies will always mean some friend made happy.

Offering service.—In Lesson V the offering service was included as a part of each Sunday's program. Refer to the suggestions made there. Do not forget that upon the offering service depends the value of the offering in the minds of the children. Its effectiveness does not necessitate great length, but it does demand impressiveness. An offering song, or an offering prayer, or a word or two of comment effects this. Rarely should all three be used. Variety in the way of referring to the offering wins attention. The repetition that little children like will come in the manner in which the money is collected—either dropped in a basket during a march, or gathered up by appointed children. If there is an offering song this, too, will invariably be the same one.

Source of the offering.—There are teachers who are particular that the children's offering shall be money earned by home tasks. This seems to me straining a point with Beginners. I should rather their first little helpful acts at home should be done with no money reward, and that the money they take for the offering should be frankly considered a delightful coöperation between their parents and themselves. Father's pennies give father a share in the giving that is made so important and so pleasurable. I see no reason for the artificial play at making the money the value of work rendered. There is a very

great value in never forgetting one's money, in bringing extra for special occasions, and in paying up for absent Sundays. It forms the habit of regular giving. The objection sometimes made to calling the offering "pennies" seems to me trivial. Children usually do bring pennies, and can easily be led to want to bring more than one. I do not believe this early habit need be a cause for sticking to the penny offering throughout one's church-school course.

After all, you will see that immediate causes are helped even when the emphasis is upon the givers and not the causes. Check yourself up short every now and then during the year and ask: "Do my children know to what they are giving? Do they delight in giving? Do they give regularly? Have I helped them to enter into the joy of the recipients? Is the offering service so perfunctory that the missionary spirit is killed? Is it so elaborate that this spirit is stifled? Is their giving well proportioned between causes near at hand and far away?

Questions

1. State briefly the possible uses of the offering, and their effect on the children.
2. Give your idea of the most ideal way to finance the Beginners' Department.
3. How can giving to one's church be made interesting? to children one never sees? to those in the community? to sick classmates?
4. Can the money children bring be a real gift if they do not earn it?

5. Why shall the purpose of the offering not be emphasized every Sunday?
6. Explain just what you want the offering to accomplish in the children's religious education.

Assignment for Observation

1. Note and criticize the kind and amount of music used and its effect.
2. Was there a worshipful spirit and to what do you accredit it? If not, what was the fault?
3. Watch for any evidence of the missionary spirit connected with the giving or purpose of the offering.

LESSON IX

THE USE OF PICTURES

The beautiful is as useful as the useful. I'm not sure but it's more so.—Victor Hugo, in *Les Miserables.*

Pictures and children.—Were an argument necessary to assure pictures a place in the Beginners' Department, we might go back to the first books that appeal to any little child and find them to be picture-books, with no stories whatsoever. We might also offer statistics that prove beyond the shadow of a doubt that the appeal is greater through the eye than through the ear.

Pictures belong with children in the popular mind as much as stories do, and one cannot imagine the poorest apology of a Beginners' room without them. One can imagine, however, pictures that are inaccessible, hung so high they are quite beyond little children's view. One can also imagine a teacher clinging to the tradition that a huge, awkward picture roll is necessary for class teaching, although she cannot but realize that such a form precludes the use of more than one picture at a time. One who has observed the delight of children in touching and talking about pictures that illustrate old stories, and the part pictures play in awakening thought, is satisfied only with a less cumbersome form. They should be large enough to

be seen by a moderate-sized circle, as they hang on the wall or are held by the teacher. In larger classes more than one copy is desirable.

Limited number.—The temptation with pictures as with songs is to use too many. This counteracts their effectiveness. Because there is so much to see, the children notice nothing. They are confused and unconsciously oppressed by the mass of figure and color about them, and when asked to find a story picture, or one illustrating the theme, are bewildered among so many possible choices. From a purely pedagogical standpoint, as well as from artistic considerations, too many pictures are bad. It is fatal to make any problem so difficult as to discourage a child, and Beginners are capable of only simple problems.

Story illustrations.—Let us think first of the pictures that illustrate the stories. These help the children to visualize the stories. A story picture is nearly always shown directly after the story has been told. It may be passed from child to child, but this method leads to impatience and disorder. A better way is to allow a group to gather about the teacher, as she holds it. In a large class there should be two or three pictures, each held by the teacher or an assistant, and each surrounded by its little group of interested children. It is, of course, possible for the children to remain in their chairs and look at the picture, but they will never do that willingly, as touch is so essential to complete appreciation. Another way of contenting everybody is to show the single large picture to a few

children at a time, and at the same time have the folders distributed, so that each one has a picture, large or small, to examine.

Waiting for comments.—Most teachers need cautioning against being too ready to make comments on the pictures. These ought to come spontaneously from the children. A question about what they see, or who can find the principal story character, is permissible, but it is usually better to wait and let the children say what they will, unhindered.

"There he is! That's Jesus." "Where's the giant?" "I see the squirrel." "I see little Lord Jesus." "Where are the cows and sheep?" These are the most usual types of comments—interest in the people and animals of the story. The small folder reproductions elicit such remarks as, "I've found my squirrel," "I see my little Lord Jesus"—showing a sense of individual appropriation. Rarely a response of feeling will come, as, "Isn't he a nice man?" "I wouldn't be so mean to my brother. You wouldn't catch me" (with one arm about his brother, commenting on the picture of Joseph sold into slavery).

Explanatory pictures.—Occasionally a story picture paves the way for a better understanding of the story, or is in itself an introduction. This is never the case, of course, when the picture reveals the story plot. A picture of the Wise-men on their camels may be necessary to enable the children to vizualize camels. The picture of a mother giving her child a drink will arouse interest in a story of God's daily gifts. A pic-

ture of trees makes a good preparation for a story of God's care of trees, and one of a mother and baby is an excellent approach to the story of Jesus and the children.

Place in the room.—After the story has been told and commented upon, its illustration will be hung low, and remain in the room for a few Sundays, but not permanently. It is important that it shall be there for a time, to recall the story, but it will be removed when it ceases to illustrate the theme of the day and tends to confusion of thought. It may appear again on a Sunday when stories are retold, and be more appreciated for having been temporarily out of sight.

Illustrations of the story truth.—Another type of picture illustrates the truth of the story, rather than its incidents. This is often the case when a story appears in the course a second time. Children giving milk to a pet cat illustrates kindness to animals from a child's standpoint, and the picture of David and the lamb is available from a previous use. Children doing errands, amusing babies, saying grace, helping old people, and otherwise carrying out the story themes are very valuable in making the themes clear and are usable in awakening thought and inspiring to action. They give, also, a childlike appearance to the room, not always obtained from the Bible story pictures. However, it might be said in passing that it is an erroneous idea that children are interested only in pictures of children, animals, and nature. If a story has appealed they want to see how the characters

looked, and find more real satisfaction over David, Joseph, Elijah, and Daniel than in attractive little nameless boys and girls. Old Mother Hubbard and Jack Sprat and his wife are not childlike figures, *per se,* but they are beloved by children.

This type of picture we need to use with restraint, the more so because it is so easy to add to their number from such outside sources as magazine covers and advertisements. Suppose your object is to impress the charm of kindness by pictures. You have added to recent pictures of stories on this theme a new picture of a child feeding chickens, one of a baby being amused by a sister, and a third of a child handing another an orange. These pictures hang on the low strip of burlap included in your circle. You say, "Jack, find the picture of somebody who was kind," and Jack, after mature deliberation or instantly, according to his temperament, touches Elisha on his way to his little room, or the shepherd bringing home his lost sheep, or a child in one of the new pictures. If you change to the question, "Who can find a kind person?" you will have a grand rush toward the pictures. Some child may surprise you by discovering in one of the permanent pictures the answer to your question—perhaps Jesus in the midst of the children. A shy child may need to be encouraged to show what he really knows, and a cock-sure child to prove his knowledge, but this use of pictures is sure to awaken thought.

Seasonal pictures.—Another kind of picture is the seasonal picture. Many of these are story pic-

tures, as much of the teaching is through nature. To this picture may be added an infinite number obtained from magazines and prints, and here again comes the temptation of crowding the room with the wealth of material available. The seasonal story pictures will, of course, hang on the wall as they occur in the course. A use of additional nature pictures that will be novel and so call attention to them is to keep them hidden and produce them, one by one, to an eager circle required to await their appearance with closed eyes. Another fascinating use of such pictures is to have them laid upon a low table or window-seat, concealed by a screen, and then, as the weather or a seasonal event is mentioned, to send a child to the table to find and bring back "a bluebird," or "a picture of sliding on the snow," or "children in the rain," as the case may be. Such pictures are usually colored, and pictures of flowers and birds are not attractive to children unless they are. Squirrels, cats, horses, and cows, on the other hand, are as interesting uncolored. These colored pictures are more effective in contrast to others in sepia.

Use of pictures.—Great variety in teaching methods comes from the ingenious use of pictures. They serve to indicate the children's choice of old stories. Otherwise their replies to what stories they want retold are not definite. They form a delightful way of choosing songs, particularly seasonal songs. The pictures of Jesus will suggest songs about him, or prayers to him. Once in a while an unusually thoughtful child

will connect a picture expressing kindness or bravery or happiness with a song that has the same theme. A "picture walk," passing from one picture which suggests a song to another, is very interesting.

Bible verses are saved from becoming mere repetitions by connecting them with pictures. "Find all the pictures that make you think 'God is love,'" the teacher says, and the response is surprising. "'Your heavenly Father feedeth them,'" she repeats. "Say this to any pictures of birds or animals in this room." There is an eager search, and not only nature pictures are pointed out, but the verse is repeated about the dogs and cow and donkey in LeRolle's "Nativity," and other animals or birds which are simply picture details. "'God is my helper,'" the children say, pointing to story characters who might say this—to Ishmael, Daniel, and Noah.

Thus are pictures only incidentally decorations. They awaken thought, and, as was suggested in the chapter on prayer, they are one of the means of creating a worshipful atmosphere.

Questions

1. How will the use of pictures determine their form?
2. What is the function of story pictures?
3. How and when shall they be shown?
4. What type of picture should be shown before the story?
5. How long should a story picture remain in the room?

6. To what use can pictures illustrating a story's truth be put? Illustrate concretely.
7. Give your ideas as to the number and value of seasonal pictures.
8. Should all pictures be colored?
9. Suggest various uses of pictures.

Problems for Discussion

A. A department cannot afford large teaching pictures and individual small pictures, with the attached story, to be taken home. Which should you choose?
B. Sources for extra pictures.

LESSON X

THE STORY PERIOD

The here and now disappears as the narrator lifts his invisible wand, and the listener journeys by roads of never ceasing wonders into lands of enchantment.—Katherine Dunlap Cather, in *Educating by Story-Telling.*

When once you have *said* a thing, that fixes it, and you must take the consequences.—Lewis Carroll, in *Alice Through the Looking-Glass.*

Let me never tag a moral to a story, nor tell a story without a meaning.—Henry van Dyke, *A Writer's Request of His Master.*

Place of the story.—In our tentative program the story period was made the climax. The reason for this was to send the children home when the finest impression had been made, with nothing following to destroy it. There is little question that the story makes the finest impression.

Its length.—The story itself does not fill the entire period. Little children cannot listen attentively more than six or eight minutes, and five or even three minutes are long enough for the usual story. In order to be told in so short a time the Beginners' story, more than any other, needs to be carefully prepared. Not an instant can be spent in rambling, not a word too many put in. The words that can usually be spared are adjectives. The sections that can most wisely be skipped are the descriptions. The sentences that are best attended to are the short ones.

How to tell it.—This short story that fills a part of the story period is full of action, and told simply yet dramatically. The story-teller does not feel hurried, even if she does occasionally hurry her words. Speaking rapidly, as one relates interesting events, is a very different matter from haste for fear one may not get through in time. If the story contains pathos, it is told with feeling, although the story-teller's voice does not quaver. Because she feels, so do her children. If it is a story of bravery and fine action, her children are thrilled as she is. If the story is impressive, such as those of the Lord Jesus, the children reflect the story-teller's tender appreciation. A story of familiar, every-day happenings is told in a quiet and intimate fashion.

The secret of story-telling is the abandon of the story-teller. She tells her story well when she forgets herself. She tells it best when she forgets both herself and her children. Then the story grips her. She lives in it. She is not telling the story. She is living the story. The inevitable effect upon the children is that they forget her and remember the story. It grips them. They live in it. They reflect her feeling, because her feeling is that of the story characters. If she exaggerates this feeling for the sake of effect, curiously enough, the effect is lost, and her listeners remain unmoved. Artificiality is always detected.

In the few moments allotted her she has the opportunity of making a vivid and lasting impression.

Through her story she sums up the thought of the hour, or gives a new idea. As the new story picture is added to those upon the wall, just so truly a new story picture is hung in the picture galleries of the children's minds. No artist who succeeds in reproducing a masterpiece can have more complete satisfaction than she, when she paints the old Bible characters vividly. No landscape painter can enjoy better making a bit of beauty permanent than she enjoys showing her children God in nature.

Gaining attention.—However, story-telling is a subject too big for a single chapter of a single book, and an entire unit of this training course is devoted to it.[1] The function of this lesson is to discuss the story period, of which the story itself is only a part.

A part of the program so vital and yet so brief, so impressive and yet so simple, needs to be protected from harm, as a precious jewel is put in a setting. This setting we call the story preparation. In the chapter on the program we spoke of physical preparation through movement or play, which prevents inattention caused by restlessness. There is mental preparation which is fully as important. We want the children to anticipate the story, and to get the most possible out of it.

The teacher may arouse anticipation by a change of grouping. "Let's all sit close together on the rug, while I tell you the story," she may say; or, "Move

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1 *Story-Telling,* by Katherine Dunlap Cather.

your chairs nearer to me, for the story." She may simply make an announcement, as, "Listen, and I will tell you a story"; or, "Are—you—ready—for—the—story?" She may put an end to the confusion of settling down after play by remarking, impressively, "When the clock is the only sound I hear, I shall begin my story"; or, "I have closed my eyes. When I can't hear a child move, I shall open them and begin my story."

She may hint at the story subject as "the story of a baby," or "a sheep story," or "another story about Jesus." She may get the children to talk about family life, or rainy days, or ants, or whatever may be the subject of the story to be told.

She may show a picture that will arouse interest and yet not give away the story plot. You remember in the lesson on pictures several subjects were mentioned that can be used in this way.

Story preparation.—These are all devices for gaining attention and arousing interest. There is another kind of story preparation that may be necessary. This is an explanation of something unfamiliar to the children, which comes into the story. Explanations in the midst of a story are decidedly out of order, so any such things should be cleared up beforehand. For instance, the camels in the story of the Wise-men, or the sheep in the story of the Good Shepherd, may not be familiar, so there will be a little conversation about sheep or camels, with pictures or toy animals for illustration.

Another kind of story preparation is to focus the thought upon the truth in the story, so that the children will be more certain to get its message. Suppose the story is about Jacob sending Joseph to find his brothers. Before it is told the children play "doing errands" for the teacher, who represents the mother. She praises their quick obedience, care, and cheerfulness, and they are more ready to see these same virtues in Joseph.

The story may be "Ruth in the Barley Field," and it is preceded by crude drawings of things the children use in helping their mothers. By this means they are made more alert to appreciate Ruth's helpfulness. The story may be about the baby Moses, and the preparation telling what their mothers did to get them ready for Sunday school.

Story preparation will not be lengthy, nor will it be the same each Sunday. It will be carefully planned, though subject to change. Its test is whether it makes a good setting for the story, so that the truth in the story will not be lost and its charm will be enhanced.

Repetition and interruptions.—Little children's response to a story may be, "Tell it again!" If there is time and if the demand from one is seconded by the others, by word or look, no true story-teller will hesitate. She will probably need to suggest a moment of play, or change of position before the second relation, but she is certain of a more attentive audience to a twice-told tale than to one that is unfamiliar.

So much is said in these days about allowing chil-

dren freedom that the question arises whether even for five minutes the teacher has a right to be the only speaker. We must realize that interrupting a story is a different matter from taking part in the circle talk. The child who interrupts a story about birds with a comment upon his new coat deserves to be rebuked or ignored. He is adding nothing to the enjoyment of the moment. He is an interrupter and not a contributor. Suppose, on the other hand, he breaks in with, "A bird built a nest right in my tree." The sympathetic story-teller welcomes that incident as part of her bird story.

The story of Noah's ark is not interrupted when a child adds to the animal pairs entering it the elephants which the teacher failed to mention. The story of "The Rain a Helper" gains in interest if child voices join in the repetitive phrase, "And still the water-drops lay quietly in the pond." The story of Jesus and the fishermen does not lag because children imitate the teacher's action as she lowers and raises a net in pantomime. Interruptions should be suppressed, but the question to be considered is, What are interruptions?

After the story.—The most carefully set jewel might still be lost were it not fastened securely to the wearer's breast. So too the story, vivid and yet simple, set in careful preparation, may be forgotten unless it is given a permanent place in the listeners' hearts. After the story the one thing to be done is to intensify the feeling it has created. This may often be achieved

by a song which expresses the same thought, by a brief prayer, or a Bible verse. It may be the story picture that crystallizes the story truth so perfectly it can never be forgotten. It may be an additional picture.

Questions, reviews, or handwork that merely serve to recall the story incidents are a waste of these last moments. Leave such things till next week's circle talk. Do you wish to play Chopin with one hand after listening to Paderewski? That unpleasant and unpedagogical process known as "pointing the moral" is simply an admission of failure on the story-teller's part. Her story was her chance for appeal.

Occasionally a form of activity may be suggested. For example, after the story of Mary's gift to Jesus each child may draw in color a flower on a card bearing the words, "A flower I will bring for my minister next Sunday." An act of service may well follow a story of service and form the climax of the session. An instance of this is to follow the story of the good Samaritan by selecting from several gifts already bought with the birthday money one suitable for a sick classmate, wrapping it carefully in tissue-paper and tying it with a bright ribbon.

Summary.—To sum up the whole subject of the story period, it is the teacher's opportunity to present new thoughts, closely related to the thoughts expressed by the children in the circle talk. Through her story she arouses feeling—of love to God, perhaps, or tender regard for animal life, or friendliness. Her task is to make sure that the feeling will be expressed

somehow and at some time. If it is love of God, it can be expressed immediately in hymn or prayer; if tenderness toward animals, its expression will come at home, and the resolve to care for pets will be strengthened by such a song as "I Love Little Pussy," or such a verse as "Be ye kind;" if friendliness is the feeling awakened, a friendly act can be planned or executed before the session closes. Thus feeling is aroused, and the feeling is carried over into action.

Questions

1. Why is the story placed toward the close of the session?
2. Experiment upon the length of time you can hold a Beginner's attention with a story.
3. Give the essentials of good story-telling.
4. What are some devices for gaining attention?
5. Explain two types of story preparation.
6. Under what circumstances would you repeat a story?
7. What are and what are not children's interruptions to the story? Explain concretely.
8. Prepare two good uses and one poor use of the few moments after a particular story.

Assignment for Observation

1. Visit a Beginners' Department and observe the story period, for the points brought out in the lesson.
2. Visit a kindergarten and observe the story preparation, the story-telling and what follows.

LESSON XI

THE CIRCLE TALK

Every pupil must have a chance to show what he truly is, so that the teacher can find out what he needs to make him a complete human being.—John Dewey, in *Schools of To-morrow.*

What it is.—The circle talk is, in three words, the child's opportunity. In the last lesson we spoke of the story as the teacher's opportunity to present new ideas and arouse feeling, and said that she has a right to suppress interruptions. The circle talk is as truly the child's chance to express himself, and she errs if she interferes with this. The wise teacher feels that through the circle talk she becomes acquainted with the child, so that she "can find out what he needs to make him a complete human being."

This does not mean that she folds her hands and allows her children to say and do whatever they wish. The result of this would be anarchy, as described in Lesson III. It means, rather, that she encourages great freedom in the way they contribute to the prevailing thought, through play, retelling stories, songs, prayers, handwork, conversation, and Bible verses. When their remarks or activities make no such contribution, she ignores them, or turns them into the desired channel.

The circle talk may perhaps best be described by

telling what it is not. It is not formal. It is not without a plan. It is not affected by the whim of a single child, in spite of the fact that a single child's remark often influences it. It is not primarily for teaching songs and Bible verses, although stories are retold and Bible verses used. It is not a review to find out how much the children know, even though they do reveal here their acquaintance with Bible stories and verses. It is not to teach them how to use their hands, though handwork is prominent. It is not a play period, though they frequently play. It is not for nature study, though nature is prominent.

The circle talk is a period of much freedom, within the bounds of a common subject. Its purpose is to interpret this subject—love, kindness, God's care, or whatever it may be—through song, play, story, conversation, objects and pictures, prayer and handwork. It encourages the children to participate in this interpretation.

An illustration.—Let us suppose the general theme to be "God's Gift of the Wind, Sun, and Rain." The last Sunday the story was "The Sun a Helper"; the week before "The Wind a Helper." To-day the new idea presented in the story period will be the help received from God's gift of rain. In her plan for the circle talk the teacher seeks to bring vividly before the children the gifts of wind and sun, so that they will experience wonder and gladness. To accomplish this she makes out a program, in the following order:

1. Tell and play last week's story.

2. Compare a pot of seeds left in a dark closet with one placed in the sunlight.

3. Sing a spring song.

4. Draw flowers.

5. In connection with the story pictures use the Bible verses, "He maketh his sun to rise," and, "He causeth his wind to blow."

6. Observe the effect of the wind and the colors made by the sun, shown through a prism.

She feels certain the children will make unexpected remarks. She anticipates one or more opportunities for prayer. She expects them to modify her plan, and they do, so that the circle talk works out as follows:

1. Observation of the work of the wind, which rattles the window. All go to the window; tell how the wind blew them along to Sunday school; point out the swaying trees and say, "He causeth his wind to blow," and express their wonder in an improvised prayer.

2. Examining the wind picture and referring to that story.

3. Playing and retelling "The Sun a Helper," because a child points to that story picture, which hangs next the wind picture.

4. One child is chosen to get the box of seeds put in a dark closet last week. The others close their eyes until it is placed in the circle. He is chosen because he has taken no part in playing the story and seems uninterested. Another child is selected to bring the pot of seedlings into the circle. She is chosen because

she needs to get away from her neighbor, who is teasing her.

5. Bible verse, "He maketh his sun to rise," used as the children speak of the seeds which the sun has waked up.

6. Song of thanks. The atmosphere of wondering interest as the seedlings are discovered makes this necessary.

7. Drawing and cutting flowers. One child asks to cut instead of draw and is given colored paper and scissors.

The spring song and the prism are not used, because of lack of time.

A second illustration.—The general theme is Love Shown through Care. The previous Sunday the lesson was on care of animals and the new idea to be presented this week is cooperation with God in tender care for people, with the good Samaritan as the story. I will indicate how the circle talk was modified by numbering the original plan and lettering the modification.

1. Conversation about the children's pets. Bringing them to mind through blackboard drawings.

A. Conversation about pets, which were brought to mind through mimicry. A child begins by mimicking his dog's bark, the others follow suit, and so the plan of blackboard drawing is abandoned.

2. Playing feed pets.

B. Drawing the food children have given animal pets. As the children whisper to the teacher what

their pets are, she draws them on the blackboard and the children add the food—yellow corn in front of the hen, a bone on the dog's plate, milk in the cat's saucer. She changes her plan because the children have just been impersonating.

3. Song, "I Love Little Pussy," sung as the children find pictures of cats in various parts of the room.

C. Song sung in connection with the drawing of the saucer of milk, and again here.

4. Drawing the shepherd's crook and staff, and other details of "The Story of a Shepherd and His Sheep."

D. The story retold just as it was the last Sunday. This takes the place of illustration, because the children have just been drawing.

5. Choosing Songs.

E. Pictures, songs, and conversation. After the story picture is pointed out, a child says he can find a picture of the little Lord Jesus; another says he sees one of birds. As the interest centers in pictures, a choice of songs is not suggested. One child sees an apple in a picture, and says he ate a red apple. "Song of the Children's Food" is started by the pianist, and one child after another names an article of food. The teacher adds food she has had, and they all sing a song of thanks. She then draws their thoughts back to the theme by saying: "God gives us our food. He depends upon us to see that our pets get some of this food, and to take care of them. He depends upon us to help take care of sick people too. Play I was a sick

mother. Who will give me a drink of water? a shawl? Who will fan me? go upstairs to get my handkerchief?" This pantomime furnishes movement and a good preparation for the story.

Thus we find that without a plan the teaching would be ineffective, and it would be equally so without ready response to the children's attitudes and needs.

Use of pictures and objects.—Let us consider the various methods one can use to interpret the lesson theme.

First, there is the use of pictures, illustrated in detail in Lesson IX. The children will frequently choose this method when the teacher has planned otherwise.

Second, there is the use of objects. A real bird's nest is much more interesting than a flat, pictured nest that cannot be handled or swung to and fro. A real cotton boll is soft to touch. Real flowers have fragrance. Real shells contain songs of the sea. Such objects make the Creator's skill convincing. Something of their teaching value depends upon the way they are presented. A sense of importance is attached to a pot of seedlings that is hidden under a handkerchief, while one wonders whether the seeds can have sprouted. The nest in a covered box, which one child is appointed to open; the seashells hidden about the room, which the children discover and take into the circle; the Easter lily that is brought from an adjoining room after the story of a brown bulb has been told, are all given the charm of mystery. The

teacher's attitude of wonder and delight will also be reflected in the children.

Use of stories, Bible verses, and prayer.—During the circle talk the story of the preceding Sunday is retold or played or illustrated or talked about. Often other old stories are referred to, and occasionally retold in part. Most frequently the last story is retold exactly as before, with the assistance of the children, who delight in completing sentences and joining in familiar phrases like a small Greek chorus. The teacher should keep clearly in mind that this retelling is not an examination on a knowledge of the story. It is a repetition of interest in it. Whether the children listen to it, assist in retelling it, illustrate it, play it, or talk about its picture, they should experience even more fully than before the feeling it is designed to arouse.

The same principle holds with Bible verses. They are for use in strengthening ideas and renewing feeling. They are not repeated as recitations. "God is love," the children say, as they draw his gifts to them, or point them out in pictures. "Love one another," they repeat, after showing in pantomime helpful acts to members of the family.

The use of songs is discussed in detail in Lesson VII. They occur frequently in the circle talk, as worship, to interpret thought and to express joy. Poems are used less frequently. They might occur more often. Stevenson's verses and the words of simple songs may be repeated instead of sung by the

teacher and some of them taught the children. The use of prayer in the circle talk is taken up in Lesson VI. Its frequency is determined by the atmosphere of the department.

Play and handwork.—Play has been frequently referred to in these lessons as a favorite form of children's self-expression. Handwork is classed with it, because in order to be effective it must contain much of the play spirit. Play as used in the church school is not mere physical exercise, nor is handwork training in skill. They are both means of expressing a child's thoughts and feelings, and a sure indication as to whether the lesson truths are making of him "a complete human being."

A child takes the part of the blind man groping his way to the pool, washing and receiving sight. Other children follow this bit of impersonation by drawing on the blackboard objects they think he liked best to see. In both ways they enter into the joy of the man on receiving his sight, and there follows appreciation of Jesus' great kindness.

The children add red apples to the tree the teacher has drawn on the board, or cut red-paper apples and paste to the tree outlined on cardboard. Instead of this one child represents the tree and the children gather from his arm-branches imaginary apples, and fill imaginary baskets. Whichever is done, they are filled with joy for the harvest.

One after another the children show in pantomime helpful deeds they can perform for their mothers and

the rest guess what these are. They draw objects they use in such acts, which are guessed by the others. In either case through the imagination helpfulness is made attractive.

Handwork or play which is not the expression of thought is mere pastime, without educational value.

Conversation.—Throughout the varied activities of the circle talk runs a stream of conversation, and a teacher needs to remember that conversation implies more than one person talking. She makes use of the children's comments, questions and remarks to interpret the thought of the hour. She is also quick to see when they indicate that a child has received an erroneous impression, or has an unsatisfied need.

It is here in the circle talk that every pupil has "a chance to show what he truly is, so that the teacher can find out what he needs to make him a complete human being."

Questions

1. Write out the various activities of the circle talk.
2. What is the function of play? handwork?
3. Why are songs used? poems?
4. When do the children pray?
5. Contrast the use of pictures and objects.
6. What importance has conversation?
7. Tell several things the circle talk is not.
8. Tell what the circle talk is.

Problems for Discussion

A. How much attention should be paid to children's remarks that are unrelated to the subject.
B. Good and bad handwork.
C. How far the teacher should direct play.

Assignment for Observation

Criticize the various activities of the circle talk as to whether they (*a*) interpret the lesson truth, (*b*) are modified by the children, (*c*) hold the interest and yet proceed in a logical sequence.

LESSON XII

THE CHILD DURING THE WEEK

Our selection of facts for study is based on our interest in the child's religious development. It is his religious acts that most concern us.—Hugh Hartshorne, in *Childhood and Character.*

The Sunday hour.—So much has been said and written about the inadequacy of a single hour a week for religious education that we are in danger of underrating the effect upon little children of the church-school session which recurs every week. It makes Sunday for them a red-letter day, its coming anticipated, its going regretted. Inadequate it is, but it is not ineffective. Its very rarity gives it a certain value, and as Thanksgiving and Christmas influence the entire year, so this Sunday hour shines down through the week.

Thinking of it in this way gives us the clue to its best use. It cannot be finished and complete; it can simply start something, to be carried on during the week. It is not an hour for the acquisition of facts, but, rather, one in which new impulses are gained and new feelings awakened. A session that is merely pleasurable will be only a pleasant memory. A session that grips the imagination and suggests certain action has far-reaching results.

A teacher's questions.—A teacher should there-

fore test her work by its power to project itself into the days between Sundays. Such questions as the following will be of assistance: Was my theme connected closely with the children's every-day life? How will it affect the things they do? Will it interpret religiously the things they see? Why am I certain they will remember the session? What particular Christian act did I succeed in making desirable? How shall I know they ever perform such an act? Why do I feel certain that they will think about God during the week? How shall I know they do?

The children in kindergarten.—No teacher can put these questions to herself without finding that she has no data for the answer. If she is truly conscientious, she will fare forth to get acquainted with the week-day children, who often seem scarcely related to the Sunday children.

There are three places where she may find them—in their homes, in hers, and in kindergarten. If they attend kindergarten, she will certainly visit them there, not once but frequently, so that she can know what ideas they are getting, where the subjects dovetail in with those she presents and where they differ, what kindergarten methods are suitable for her Sunday hour, and which of her children do not attend. She finds from her own observation and from talking with the kindergartner traits in her children which her slight acquaintance has barely suggested. These visits help her to see reasons for the difference be-

tween those of her children who attend kindergarten and those who do not.

The children at home.—The best answer to the teacher's questions is to be found in the children's homes. Unless she is a frequent visitor there, however, she hardly gets below the surface, for in a call upon a mother and child the mother dominates the situation and the child rarely shows his real self. Nor does she approve of comments upon the child in his presence. She needs to see the mother alone to find out what she wants to know. Where she is intimate enough to go in and out freely, to join in the child's play, to tell him stories, to put him to bed and hear his bedtime prayer, she gets to know this particular child very well indeed, and realizes the effect of her teaching.

The children as visitors.—Such intimacy is not possible with all of her children. Another way of becoming acquainted with them is to have them in her own home. She may invite them to an occasional party. She learns to know them better individually if they visit her in smaller groups, or alone. She enjoys having her children regard their teacher's home as a place of delight, where they are always welcome. Here she finds out very soon the sort of appeal her teaching makes, and often has a chance to supplement it. They test the new song she thinks of using. They give her constant practice in story-telling. They reveal themselves through play. They ask intimate questions

and make her their confidant. Yes, and her questions are all answered.

Need for a week-day session.—There are communities which have no kindergarten; there are teachers too busy to make frequent calls upon their children; and there is many a teacher whose home cannot be a place of rendezvous for her children. Even the teacher who can see her children in all three ways has a sense of dissatisfaction, for the questions she is asking herself are not always answered to her liking. She realizes that in their homes and kindergartens she is an observer merely, and even in her own home she is unable to see many of her children. She feels the need for a week-day hour, when all her children can be with her, and can be given opportunities to perform acts of service. This is her interpretation of what a week-day school of religion for little children ought to be.

She arranges a convenient week-day hour, and selects the church-school room as a meeting-place. She feels that the children's activities for other people ought to be associated with their impulse to serve. In the room on Sunday she tries to give them a consciousness of God and a wish to help others. In this same room on a week-day she wants them to become godlike through service.

Training in service.—She plans with infinite care activities easy enough for them to perform and interesting enough for them to enjoy. She also plans games, an occasional story, and a song now and then,

but the main occupation of the hour is doing something for somebody. It is a training in service, and follows closely the Sunday subjects.

When the story has been of home life, gifts are made for members of the family—simple things little children can readily make. These may be pin-balls, in which they stick the pins, for their mothers; paper toys they color and cut out for little brothers and sisters; blotters pasted on attractive post-cards for their fathers. When the story has been about Jesus' healing of the sick, or the story of the good Samaritan has been told, pictures are pasted on cards for hospital children, a box of scrapbook material is packed for a sick classmate, or paper toys are colored and cut out for crippled children. When the theme has been kindness to animals, a tree is hung with food for winter birds, or a bird's drinking-place is put on the church grounds, or an expedition is made to the woods with nuts for squirrels and chipmunks, or to the zoo, to become acquainted with animal life.

At Thanksgiving a gift of vegetables and fruit is delivered. At Christmas a tree is trimmed and presented to a needy family or a children's institution. At Easter the bulbs planted in the fall and cared for all winter are given away to old people of the church.

On these week-days there is plenty of time for the activities that could be only hinted at on Sunday. Sometimes a bit of handwork that illustrates a story can be utilized as a gift, such as a horse cut-out, made in parts fastened together with brass paper fasteners,

after the story of Prince the horse, or a squirrel scrap-book made after a squirrel story, or animal cut-outs after the story of Noah's ark.

Not only do the work of the children's hands serve as gifts, but they practice songs to sing to old people and stories to tell, in prose and verse. Sometimes the hour resolves itself into a ride to a home where there is somebody who will appreciate an entertainment by little children. Sometimes they adjourn to a near-by daisy field and pick big bunches of flowers to send to the city. Sometimes they gather autumn leaves and arrange them in a basket as a surprise for the minister. Sometimes they pack a box of seashells and pebbles which they collected on their vacation, for children who have never been to the seashore.

Short-term clubs and helpers.—The teacher who finds a week-day session every week impossible, has a Christmas club for a few weeks before Christmas, or an Easter club in the springtime, or a vacation club in the summer, in which she provides similar activities.

No teacher can carry on such week-day work without help. Where her assistants are unable to do this she may gain the cooperation of the mothers who are obliged to come with their children, or of young people in the church school. Camp-fire girls or organized girls' classes make excellent assistants. Teaching experience or qualifications are not necessary in overseeing the children's occupations and in preparing work for them to do. This is a splendid opportunity for young people to engage in church work which is

within their capacity, which engages their interest, and helps them to become acquainted with children.

The results.—In this week-day contact with her children the teacher not only finds her questions regarding the effects of her teaching answered, but she becomes better acquainted with her children, so that she can teach them more wisely. She has no longer a theoretical knowledge of individuals; she has child psychology at first-hand. Individuals separate themselves from the mass, and challenge her to individual methods.

The effect upon the children is a feeling of intimate friendship with the teacher and assistants that can never be gained in the more formal Sunday sessions. These week-day hours of work together for others make religion practical to them. It is pretty certain that faith and works will never be divorced in their minds.

Questions

1. What should the Sunday session accomplish?
2. Give a teacher's test questions upon her success with her children. Would you add others?
3. In what places can she find the answers?
4. What help can she expect from observing her children in kindergarten?
5. How far will calling upon children in their homes answer her questions?
6. Why are children visitors to be desired?
7. What is the need of a week-day session?
8. Explain in detail a week-day session.

9. What can be substituted?
10. How can assistants be secured?
11. What results should a teacher gain from this means of contact with children, for herself and for the children?

Assignment for Observation

1. Observing the same children who have been observed in a Beginners' Department (*a*) in kindergarten, (*b*) in their homes, (*c*) in your own. Afterward jot down what you have learned about little children in general and individual children.
2. Observing a week-day church-school session for Beginners.

LESSON XIII

RECORDS AND RECOGNITION

The superintendent and the secretary must be sympathetic coworkers if the records of the school are to have educational value.—Walter S. Athearn, in *The Organization and Administration of the Church School.*

The need for records.—The Beginners' Department is such an informal organization that at first thought there seems little need for records, and none for recognition. Referring to Lesson I, however, one recalls that the secretary did make out records, and a hint was given of the scope of these records.

We will consider the things that should be recorded, and under each subject take up the sort of records desirable (1) for the teachers, (2) for the children, (3) for the parents, (4) for the school.

Enrollment.—1. (For the teachers.) The most loosely organized department has a list of members. This may consist simply of the children's names. It should contain besides their ages, their parents' names and addresses, and their attendance or nonattendance at kindergarten. This information is needed by the department secretary and superintendent. It should be kept in duplicate record books, or in a card catalogue accessible to both. In large departments, where the assistants have groups of children in charge, they should be furnished with record books or duplicate

cards containing this information about the children for whom they are accountable.

When a class is promoted from the Cradle Roll this information is handed over from the Cradle Roll superintendent to the Beginners' secretary. When a child does not enter from the Cradle Roll the information is obtained by the secretary from the person who brings him. Little children are often brought to visit before they are ready to become members of the class. The secretary finds out whether they are merely visitors before enrolling them.

The parents' names and addresses are necessary for a calling list and to use in sending notices, messages, and folders to absentees. The ages and week-day education of the children form a basis for promotion and influence teaching methods.

2. (For the children.) Children may show Cradle Roll certificates on entering the department, and take great pride in doing so. This occurs only when a class is promoted on Promotion Day. Ordinarily, children enter the Beginners' Department singly, when they are old enough, not waiting for Promotion Day. A new member may be given an attractive card on which his name has been written by the secretary, following which is printed "is one of the children in the Beginners' Department of the ——— church." The secretary has these cards on hand every Sunday. Instead, he may be shown his name, which the secretary has written on a birthday record or membership chart,

and stick a colored seal next it. All these methods give him a sense of membership.

3. (For the parents.) A class of children promoted from the Cradle Roll on Promotion Day may carry home notes to the parents expressing the Beginners' teacher's pleasure in welcoming them to the school, and her hope for coöperation. A Mother's Letter, forming a part of the syndicate Graded Lessons equipment, outlines the Beginners' lessons and suggests the mother's cooperation. When a child enters the department by himself, such a letter may be given him or his mother, or the following week a personal note may be sent to the parents.

4. (For the school.) The names and addresses of the children who enter are given the school secretary by the department secretary.

Records of attendance.—1. (For the teachers.) The secretary keeps the attendance record in a department record book, which is accessible to the superintendent, or copies the record into the superintendent's book, and each week she gives the assistants a list of the absent children for whom they are accountable. These records are kept for a more vital purpose than to compute the average attendance. Folders are sent each week to absentees. Causes for absence are discovered through calls, telephoning, notes, or inquiries. Where there is no sufficient reason for absence efforts are made to encourage better attendance. A card showing a vacant chair in a circle is sent a child, or a call is paid.

2. (For the children.) Any plan for the children to record their attendance must take a minimum of time, or it should be abandoned. Many teachers prefer to make much of children's presence through the greeting, and speak then of those who are absent. It is feasible to have a chart containing the children's names on which each child pastes a sticker as he enters the room. After the session has begun the chart is removed by an assistant, and the tardy children paste on their stickers at the door. Otherwise the program is interrupted. However, at an age when contagious diseases, bad weather, and distance prevent perfect attendance, absences should be regretted rather than censured. It is not usually the children's fault when they are absent.

3. (For the parents.) For this very reason the parents' cooperation is needed, and reports of their children's attendance will show them that their efforts in getting their children to the church school are appreciated, or their negligence in this matter noticed. These reports may be oral, given when calling or telephoned. They may be written on postals. They may be printed forms filled in. Their value lies in the regularity with which they are given—monthly or quarterly.

4. (For the school.) The attendance of the department may be given to the school secretary by means of the card system, a card for each child.

Records of offerings.—1. (For the teachers.) The records of offerings should be kept in the same book

with the attendance, and the amounts given by the treasurer to the secretary when these offices are separate. Often a second offering or a birthday offering is taken, which is in charge of the department, and not paid into the school treasury. The causes to which this special fund goes should be recorded.

2. (For the children.) Occasionally throughout the year the treasurer will review with the children the records of their offerings. An offering chart or set of mounted pictures makes a concrete record—showing a Christmas tree to represent the one given to the Children's Home, or a basket of food to record the Thanksgiving present, and a plant to recall the Easter plant that was bought.

3. (For the parents.) As the offerings are really made by the parents, they will be interested to look over the secretary's records or the children's chart, as they visit the school.

4. (For the school.) Records of special gifts made in this extra offering are given to the school treasurer at the close of the year.

Public records.—Some Beginners' and Primary Departments make out an attractive summary of their year's work, illustrating it with photographs, for the children to keep and for the church people. This gives an idea of what is being done for the youngest children, and arouses interest and often assistance. The adults of the church always enjoy entertainments given by these children, and many of them feel aggrieved because the modern system of religious edu-

cation keeps them in a separate department, and permits no opening exercises of the whole school, in which they can be viewed, laughed at, and admired. These public records help to explain the importance of the attempt of the church school to give the youngest children the right sort of religious education.

Private records.—The records that most truly record the condition of the class cannot be made public. They are usually not written down at all, but are kept in the teacher's heart. Occasionally these records are given orally to the assistants or the mother. A rare teacher will keep a private record for her own satisfaction. It will run something like this:

Janet. Less shy. Expressed love of God as she listened to the story.

Robert. More helpful. Forgets himself when a younger child needs assistance.

Alice. Growing unruly. Will try seating her beside a younger child to watch. *Later.* This worked, and in giving care she had no wish to misbehave.

John. Expresses himself best through drawing. Showed fine idea of hospitality by this means.

Sarah. Seems secretive. *Later.* She confided in me about her new brother. Since then she has talked more.

Such a record strikes the very heart of the matter, but good taste and fine feeling will prevent a teacher from sharing it with any except those vitally interested. Its items will never be made the subject of common talk.

Recognition.—The Beginners will not receive recognition in the form of marks or credits for the work done in the department. Bible stories retold or Bible verses repeated correctly will not be recorded. For children under six this is not desirable. Memorization and self-expression are not accounted duties here. There is recognition of birthdays, and of attendance, as has been said, but of nothing else.

A warning.—A warning is needed, lest a student gain the idea that an unrecorded achievement is worthless. No Beginners' teacher ought to spend time making records that might better be used in preparing her lessons, or improving her surroundings, or becoming better acquainted with her children. Record-keeping is principally the work of the secretary, who turns over her records to the teacher and her assistants. Through simple records they gain the ability to evaluate their work, and to improve it.

Questions

1. What is the advantage of records?
2. Discuss records of membership (1) for the teacher, (2) for the children, (3) for the parents, (4) for the school.
3. Discuss in the same way records of attendance.
4. Discuss records of offerings.
5. What do you mean by public records?
6. What private records may be kept?
7. For what do Beginners receive recognition?
8. What warning is necessary?

LESSON XIV

STANDARDS FOR PROMOTION

Teaching is, after all, the adaptation of our methods to the normal development of boys and girls, and their education can be measured only in terms of the changes which we are able to bring about in knowledge, skill, appreciation, reasoning, and the like.—Strayer and Norsworthy in *How to Teach.*

It is not necessary, or even desirable, that the child's general ideas shall be definite and accurate at this time (three to six), but that they shall be started in the right direction.—E. A. Kirkpatrick, in *The Individual in the Making.*

Fake standards.—Standards for promotion should not be considered primarily as standards of knowledge. A certain amount of knowledge enters in, but the amount of a child's knowledge is not the reason for promoting him to the Primary Department. He may, through lack of regular attendance, know very few of the stories, or Bible verses, or songs, and still be eligible for promotion.

Nor is the test the length of time he has spent in the Beginners' Department. He may have attended only one of the two years, and be ready for promotion. He may have attended only a few months. There may be some children in the Primary class he enters who have never attended the Beginners' Department. Because of this possibility, the course of study in the International Primary first grade repeats the principal themes of the Beginners' Course.

The standard of age.—The chief basis for promotion is age. At six, or approximately six, the children are ready to enter the Primary Department. The normal child of six is better off there, even though he has missed the Beginners' stories, and the ideas presented in them.

At six the methods of the Beginners' Department are inappropriate and outgrown. Toward the close of a year there are usually one or more precocious children who show signs of this. They chafe at waiting for the little ones' remarks or attempts at story-telling. They refuse to play. They are eager to be prominent. They are inclined to show off. Many a child who has been a real trial becomes amenable when transferred to the Primary Department.

This promotion will occur on the annual Promotion Day.

The standard of day-school attendance.—Attendance upon school is another standard for promotion which qualifies the test of age. A child who is not quite six but has commenced school should be promoted and be in Primary Grade I, which corresponds to a similar school grade.

This standard is difficult to set up, as frequently little children commence school but drop out after a few weeks. The question will then arise whether they shall be put back in the Beginners' Department.

The standard of play.—This will depend somewhat upon their playmates. Play grades children. The children they select as playmates are the ones

that are usually fitted to be their classmates. Thus age and school attendance may need to be qualified by the test of play. Upon these three tests will depend their promotion. The final test applied in each individual case will be what the child needs to make him "a complete human being."

Stories and Bible verses.—As was said, promotion is not dependent upon the amount of knowledge gained. It is a satisfaction to most teachers to know that their children are familiar with certain Bible stories and can repeat certain Bible verses. To one type of mind a list of Bible verses to "pass on" seems desirable.

There is no such passing test from the kindergarten to the first grade, in the public-school system. A kindergartner would dislike to have her children leave her, knowing they had missed certain of the best stories and verses and songs of childhood, yet to list these as a basis of promotion would seem absurd.

A Beginners' teacher may wisely list the most important Bible and nature stories and the Bible verses that best express a little child's religion. These she uses more often than other stories and verses that possess only a passing value. If such a story occurs on a Sunday when the attendance is small, she may omit a less important story the following Sunday, and substitute this. Such stories she retells often, and refers to frequently. The most childlike Bible verses she uses repeatedly, as an expression of thought. She is thus making sure of certain knowledge for her chil-

dren. The children to be promoted are kept in mind, and she often considers them in this way: "I must find out whether John's mother read him the baby Moses story we had when he was absent." "Mary doesn't seem to be interested in the Nativity picture. I must retell the story." "Sara looked stupid when I suggested finding a picture about 'Be ye kind one to another.' I must try it again." "Helen missed the spring nature stories, and evidently they were not read her at home. I will stop in and tell them to her some day."

Religious ideas.—These most important stories are not selected only for the appeal of the incidents, but for the ideas they convey. The Bible verses that a teacher most wants her children to know are those that express a fundamental truth or command, or an appropriate prayer.

The ideas that make up a little child's religion are well expressed in the Standard for a Beginners' Department.

1. Knowledge of the power of God, to give love, protection and care.

2. A consciousness of God as his heavenly Father and Jesus Christ as his friend.

3. Ideals of right conduct.

All through the year the teacher is trying to give her children these ideas. As the year draws near its close she tests the individual children to be promoted by such comments as the following: "Did the light way John replied 'God' to my question indicate that I

was tedious, or that he hasn't a real sense of God and love of him?" "Lucy's frequent notice of the pictures of Jesus prove her friendship for him." "Harry needs more nature teaching. He sees no connection between nature and God, and exhibits little wonder." "Ruth's use of 'God is love,' when I asked for verses about God's taking care, shows she has the right idea of that verse." "Robert was able to make a keen distinction between those who are doing right and those who are doing wrong in the story picture." "Maud's face is often in itself an indication of her love of God." "I must help Barbara gain more sense of God's power behind her parents. They seem all-sufficient to her."

Such individual consideration is possible with the class to be promoted, when it might not be with the entire department. In very large departments the assistants can help in this, and talk over the children with the teacher from their angle. The teacher's private records, mentioned in the last lesson, help vastly in this regard.

Conduct.—The object of the teacher's work is, of course, the conduct of her children, and this is the final test of her success. She will therefore look very carefully at the conduct of the class to be promoted, and test this also by the Standard for a Beginners' Department.

The conduct of a Beginner may manifest:

1. Love, trust and reverence for God.

2. Association of the heavenly Father with daily life.

3. Right behavior.

4. Love for God through prayer, praise, and effort to please him.

5. Love for others through acts of helpfulness.

The teacher watches for evidence of these things in the class to be promoted. She cannot bear to send any child into the Primary Department without the sense of God as an every-day Helper and a wonderful Father. She looks for an attitude in prayer, in praise songs, and during stories about God which proves that this is so. She sometimes suggests that the children ask the heavenly Father to help them be good.

She tests their behavior individually. She looks for an improvement in obedience, in willingness to give up to others, and especially in helpfulness. If she were asked to put in a nutshell the great idea she has tried to give them, she would say, "Consciousness of God," and for the great virtue she has tried to develop would name helpfulness. Her task seems to her to be mainly teaching about God, and training in service. She watches eagerly for evidences of these things in the class to be promoted.

Promotion service.—A service based upon this conception of tests for the promoted class will be in the nature of a service and not an examination. A story may be told by the teacher and children, not at all to show how well they know it, but eagerly, to

give the audience the pleasure the story gives them. Story pictures may be shown and Bible verses repeated that explain them, not with the appearance of reciting something they know well, but of telling about their beloved pictures. They will sing to praise, or pray, or express a thought—never to "sing well." Such a service is worthy the name, and actually it is passing a test—of love of God and consciousness of his care, of ideals of goodness, of friendship for Jesus, of happy-hearted delight in their religion. A word of interpretation will assist parents and friends to appreciate such a service.

Influencing the children's attitude.—Children are so suggestible that it is easy for a teacher to make promotion to the Primary Department seem desirable or something to be dreaded. No doubt it will be hard for her to part with them, but if she is honestly interested in their welfare she will rejoice that they are ready to be advanced. She begins several weeks before Promotion Day to talk to them alone and as a group about being promoted and arouses keen anticipation. It comes to be considered an honor to belong to the graduating class. She regards it as a high compliment when an eager little face looks up into hers and she is told, "I can hardly *wait* to go." And if a timid child clings to her and confides her longing to stay, she does not yield to a weak enjoyment of the child's affection, but paints a glowing picture of the new room and arranges some way for her to become acquainted with the new teacher. The Beginners'

teacher is ambitious to send out a class enthusiastic and expectant.

Questions

1. What is the standard age for promotion to the Primary Department? Give exceptions.
2. What effect has attendance at school upon promotion?
3. What is meant by the standard of play?
4. How does a wise teacher regard a child's knowledge of Bible stories and verses?
5. How can she test her children's religious ideas?
6. How can she test their conduct?
7. Write out a Promotion Service.
8. How should a teacher influence the children's attitude toward promotion?

Problems for Discussion

A. Whether a child five and a quarter years old who has entered school shall be promoted with children of six.

B. Whether to promote a child of six well developed physically but not mentally.

C. What can be done for a child who, according to age and school attendance, should be promoted, but whose religious ideas and conduct are not satisfactory.

LESSON XV

PLANNING FOR SPECIAL DAYS

What is any festival to a child? It is what he remembers it to have been; his delighted expectation reflects past pleasures.—Florence Hull Winterburn, in *From the Child's Standpoint.*

The special days.—Any course of lessons for Beginners recognizes the importance of the great festival days—Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Easter. These festival days not only determine the lessons that precede and follow them, but Easter and Christmas Sundays are usually celebrated by the church school, and frequently the Beginners are given a part in this general celebration. In some schools there is also a general Thanksgiving service on the Sunday preceding Thanksgiving. Children's Day, the second Sunday in June, is set apart as the Sunday in which the children take part in the morning service, or have a special service later in the day. Promotion Day is still another of the church-school special days.

Their abuse.—Special days are either dreaded or anticipated by both teachers and children. That they are strong influences in the church-school year is proved by the intensity of the feeling in regard to them. It is also true that the teacher who enjoys showing off her children may anticipate these days and the children who do not enjoy being shown off may

dread them. It is true, again, that some children who dote on making recitations may look forward to a certain type of celebration the teacher disapproves. The manner of observing these special days determines their value or abuse.

They are abused when they are allowed to overshadow the Sundays between, which are made to seem unimportant except as preparatory to these red-letter days. In some schools, as soon as Thanksgiving is over, drills upon Christmas songs begin; Easter recitations and songs precede Easter by many weeks: and September is devoted to preparation for Promotion Day.

This conception of the festival days as times for display is an abuse of them. A public performance in which little children entertain adults is a celebration for the adults, but not for the children. Children who are shy suffer tortures, particularly as they often make slips which cause laughter. Children who are forward are not made less so by public appearances. When the preparation consists of tedious rehearsals and drills it takes away the educational value of these special days for the children, and the delight and enthusiasm they ought to arouse.

Preserving their value.—Their value is retained when they are observed by services rather than performances, and when these services are childlike and entered into with joy by the children. For such services there is no drilling, but the songs and verses and stories are used in the spirit of services as truly

in preparation as upon the festival days. They are familiar through constant use as expressions of feeling, not through many empty repetitions for the sake of knowing them perfectly. The thoughts of the children are not upon their appearance or upon the audience, but upon the words they say, or the songs they sing, or the stories they tell.

These days are red-letter days, because their observance is childlike and natural and joyous. The preparation is a preparation of interest and of thought, not of memorizing words to be "rendered." No particular child is allowed to feel himself prominent, but the children understand that each one is a contributor to the continued story told by Bible verses, poems, and songs, or to the chorus of praise, or to the seasonal song sung together. It is perfectly possible for these little children to have a part appropriate to them, and the modern departmentalized school needs to get together occasionally to gain *esprit de corps*. It is equally true that no department should be forced to take part in a celebration to which it contributes, but from which it receives nothing. Nobody would consider asking the Junior Department to sing at a service of stories and songs suitable for Beginners, yet the Beginners are often expected to take part in services in which the appeal is far above them. There should be at least a story for them, and they should usually be taken to their own room after their part of the service.

The time of celebration.—The preceding para-

graphs apply to celebrations of the entire school, in which the Beginners have a part. There is no special day, except perhaps Children's Day, whose value for little children is not diminished by giving up their entire class session for a general service. They may share in the beginning or end of a service that is held for the entire school, but their own class session, particularly on a special day, should not be sacrificed. If it is, this is done because the older members of the school wish to be entertained or to exhibit a large school, not for the sake of the children themselves. It is in their own room in their own class session that Christmas and Thanksgiving and Easter can be interpreted according to their understanding, and give joy and occasion for delightful memories. Parents and friends can be invited to share in this special-day session, when they will find the children most natural and most charming.

An afternoon service for the entire school can be shared by little children. They should have no part in an evening service. It is pure exploitation to keep children up beyond their bedtime at a high nervous tension to entertain an audience of adults.

The Beginners' Department can join with the Primary Department, and possibly with the Junior Department also, in brief opening or closing services on a special day, and still have the major part of the time for their own session.

Thanksgiving. — In the Beginners' Course Thanksgiving is the climax of the autumn lessons.

If the children take part in any school service, it will be by a song or by saying Bible verses that have been used frequently in the department, after which they return immediately to their room.

A school gift of fruit and vegetables forms an appropriate Thanksgiving observance, and the little children can join in this, and march into the main room, each bringing his gift.

Such a harvest gift can be made as a department, or with the Primary Department, and will make the day unforgetable for the children.

Christmas.—Christmas is the high light of the children's year. Its joy must be preserved for them, and to do that they must be protected from exploitation and undue excitement. Nothing, as was said, can interpret Christmas as well for them as their own class session. If the school meets together for a special opening service, the Beginners will happily sing their Christmas song, and help their teacher tell the Christmas story, or the story of their Christmas gifts. In one such brief, opening service, a certain Beginners' class proudly displayed a tiny Christmas tree hung with colored silk bags of money for the hungry children of Armenia. With intense interest they told what food each little bag represented, as the teacher touched them one by one, and so it became a magical tree to all, hung with bottles of milk, loaves of bread, candy, cookies, and sugar. Thus the spirit of giving was made a feature of the Christmas service.

A Christmas Sunday service at another hour may

include a little children's song that is familiar through long use, but unless a story suitable for them is provided, they will neither be benefited by the rest of the service, nor add to the reverent atmosphere.

There should be a week-day story-hour or Christmas-tree party. If this is for the Beginners alone, or the Beginners and Primary children, stories, games, gifts, or no gifts and simple refreshments will make up the program.

In some schools the Christmas tree is for the entire school, and the various departments furnish the entertainment. The Beginners will delight in this, provided their part does not consist of wearisome recitations. They can act in pantomime parts of a Christmas story told by the teacher, for example, representing the snowflakes, the wind and the trees in "The Promise," from *The Story-Teller,* by Maud Lindsay. They can chop down a tree in pantomime, set it up, hang it with imaginary gifts, and show in pantomime what these gifts are, which the audience guess. They can represent the toys in the toy-shop, also to be guessed. In such ways they enjoy themselves thoroughly, are under no tension, and delight the audience by their naturalness.

Easter.—Easter is not a festival in which little children should appear conspicuously. The Easter appeal is not the same for them as for older pupils. They may sing an Easter song of nature's awakening, or march into the main room with their gift of a plant or flowers. They must not on any account miss their

own class session, because they need to have immortality explained in a very simple way on this day.

One school had the lesson periods of the three lower departments come first, followed by a closing service together. The Beginners entered with a plant they had bought as an Easter gift, and sang an Easter greeting and an Easter nature song, each child representing a flower that "lifts up its head to say, 'It's Easter Day, glad Easter Day.'" The Primary children with their teacher told a story that the Beginners could understand, and the Juniors presented to the Beginners and Primary children Easter gifts that they had made.

Children's day.—On the children's own day they will naturally have a part. It may be a simple continued story, told in Bible verses, songs, poems and perhaps a story. It may be simply a group of songs. It may be a circle talk, conducted on the same plan as those in the class sessions. It will at any rate be childlike, and given in the joyous and unconscious spirit that accompanies anything familiar and well understood, and that is absent from a mere performance laboriously rehearsed.

Promotion day. — The Beginners' graduating class should of course be included in the Promotion service. Their part will be retelling stories and Bible verses and singing songs that have been frequently used in their department. These may be so arranged as to give an idea to the adults of the scope of a little child's religion, though the children themselves will

have no idea of anything more than sharing favorite stories, verses, and songs.

Recognizing the danger.—The danger every Beginners' teacher needs to recognize and to guard against is that the value of these special days may be lost for the children through the part they are given in their celebration, and that the preparation for them may degenerate into mere drill and rehearsal. Their function is not attained when the children are expected simply to make these days interesting to older people, often at a sacrifice of naturalness and joy. Older people may still be entertained by attending festival celebrations in which the children take part with unaffected childlikeness, in real religious services. Thanksgiving, Christmas, Easter, Children's Day, and Promotion Day are all important influences in the religious education of little children.

Questions

1. Name the special days celebrated by the church school.
2. Describe how they may be abused.
3. How should their value be preserved?
4. How can departments combine in observing these days?
5. Describe Thanksgiving observances.
6. How may Christmas be celebrated?
7. What is an appropriate observance of Easter?
8. What principles should determine the observance of Children's Day?
9. What part can Beginners have in Promotion Day?

10. What dangers should a teacher guard against?

Problems for Discussion

A. How to insure appropriate observance of special days when this observance is in the hands of a committee who do not share the ideals of the Beginners' teacher.

B. Preventing an audience from showing amused pleasure at the children's part in a service.

C. Getting the children together for any necessary rehearsing.

D. How through these special days to give the children a joyous sense of belonging to the large school.

E. How to convince the church-school officers who want to see the whole school together that this may be done on special days, but would be an injustice to the children if it occurred frequently.

LESSON XVI

HOME COOPERATION

The home life of a child is usually a determining factor in his religious and moral reactions.—Hugh Hartshorne, in *Childhood and Character.*

Its importance.—The teacher of Beginners needs home cooperation more than the teacher of any other grade, because, with the exception of the minority who attend kindergarten, her children's entire time is spent at home. In Lesson XII it was said that she could only expect to start something which might be continued in the homes. In a sense this is so with any teacher. The short church-school session admits of no completed work. In fact, the object of the teaching is to interpret life, and the pupils' response must come in their daily actions. With older pupils home is only one of several environments in which they figure. With little children home is the only field of action. Teachers, schoolmates and various outside people wield as strong an influence upon older children as their parents do. Parents are the supreme influence in little children's lives. Thus it is easily seen that without the sympathetic cooperation of parents, or at least of mothers, a Beginners' teacher finds her hands tied.

Co-operation in making attendance regular.—In the first place, the children's attendance is absolutely

dependent upon the parents. They cannot come to the church school alone, they must be taken home, and a parent is usually obliged to stay with a newcomer during the first few sessions.

The children are likely to assist in this special cooperation. They nearly always enjoy going to Sunday school. It is usually their first adventure into the big world outside their homes. It forms the subject of much conversation at home. "Is today Sunday?" is a common question, and a disappointing answer brings another—"Will tomorrow be?" It is an exceptionally indifferent parent who is not pleased with this display of interest and anxious to gratify it. Even the indifferent parent will do so in the interests of peace. What a little child wants he wants very much, and is perfectly free to say so.

A shy child may need to have his interest stimulated. In this case the mother makes the Beginners' class the subject of frequent comment. If she is wise, she will continue regular attendance until her child's timidity has changed to interest.

The teacher's friendly personality and her manner of conducting the class are, of course, the determining factors in gaining the children's interest. Her attitude toward the mothers who bring their children is as great a factor in securing their cooperation. Her unassumed interest in their children and enthusiasm over her work will predispose them to cooperate.

They need, however, not merely a general impression of interest and capability on the teacher's part.

They need to realize their own responsibility and her dependence upon them. Many a teacher is satisfied with the flattering comments of mothers who admire her teaching ability. She should turn about and confess the inadequacy of her work unless supplemented by theirs. She can particularly emphasize the need of regular attendance, especially to a parent who does not realize its importance. The parents who accompany their children will be most likely to appreciate this. In Lesson XIII the suggestion was made of reports on attendance to be sent to the parents at regular intervals.

Co-operation in the class session.—Parents, especially mothers, always form a part of the class attendance. Their presence should be a help. It is frequently a hindrance. Mothers who exhibit a critical attitude are a real trial to any teacher, particularly to one who is young and inexperienced. Mothers who whisper and visit with one another spoil any session. Mothers who comment upon the children and make them self-conscious by laughing at their quaint remarks are a real menace to effective teaching.

It is safe to say that this lack of cooperation is not intentional, and can be overcome by the teacher. The young teacher who is awed by a critical attitude should neither ignore nor endure it, but take the bull by the horns, frankly confess her difficulty, and ask for assistance. Mothers who assist in the circle or are occasionally appointed to tell the story will not sit on the critic's bench, which belongs to loafers. Whisper-

ing mothers will respond to a tactful request before the session for assistance in keeping the atmosphere one of interest and order. If this does not work, a suggestion to the children for silence, "so that I can hear the clock tick," will induce mothers to share in this silence. A teacher who tells parents of the difficulty she herself has in invariably treating the children's comments with seriousness, however amusing they may be, will help them to see the necessity of this self-control. However, to give mothers some responsibility in the session will best secure their cooperation.

Co-operation in use of teaching material.—The children carry home folders containing the stories they have listened to, and will enjoy hearing again and again. It lies entirely with their parents or some older member of the family whether they shall have this pleasure during the week, and thus whether the stories shall achieve their full purpose. Parents, who are so often called upon to tell stories, should look upon this as a delightful way of solving the problem of stories to tell. A teacher can do much to help them look at the matter in this light—as stories to be told and enjoyed, not as lessons to be learned. She can suggest that the bedtime or late afternoon story-hour shall include the last church-school story, or one of the well-beloved older ones, and that Bible stories will bear as frequent repetition as favorite nursery tales.

There are Bible verses and often words of songs in these folders, which parents can teach. A teacher

should put frankly before the parents the impossibility of teaching the words of songs in the brief time allotted her. She can suggest that these songs be said or sung at bedtime. She should also explain the use of the Bible verses in appropriate connections, rather than as mere recitations—as grace at meals, as additional prayers, as comments upon nature, daily comforts, pictures, and Bible stories.

Helping the children remember.—During the course of a year the teacher asks the children to bring various things to Sunday school. Sometimes these are objects of nature, sometimes flowers or toys to give away, sometimes pictures to illustrate a seasonal lesson, sometimes extra money for a special cause.

She does not trust to the children's memory, but gives them something to take home as a reminder—notes or papers on which they have drawn the flowers or toys or pieces of money they expect to bring, with an explanation written above.

The mother's cooperation is needed here or such messages accomplish nothing.

Giving opportunities for self-expression.—Most important is the parents' cooperation in giving their children opportunities to express the lesson teachings in daily life. In the folders published by the syndicate a section entitled "The Mother's Part" gives suggestions of this sort, for example, that care of pets, or helpfulness to parents, or hospitality be emphasized. A printed message is often overlooked. It needs to be reenforced by the teacher's word. This can be done

after the session, to the group of mothers who are ready to take the children home. Notes pinned to the children's coats may ask for this important home cooperation. They will be simple, straightforward requests, such as, "Will you give John an opportunity to care for a pet or wild birds or squirrels?" "I hope Mary may be given some household tasks this week." "Will you encourage such games as house and dolls?" "A good additional bedtime story can be found in ———."

Imagine the lasting influence of a child's first lessons in religion if they were continued at home in such ways. With older children who attend public school and have other outside interests, there can be no single, dominant thought running through a week. A little child's week can be a continuous impression of the Sunday thought, but only with the sympathetic and energetic cooperation of the parents.

The teacher in such a case is merely one who directs the course of religious education, who gives new impulses and fresh ideas and arouses feeling. What is more natural than that the parents, and particularly the mothers, should re-emphasize these ideas, and foster the impulses, and encourage expression of the feelings throughout the week?

Children so educated will always associate feeling with action. They will gain the habit of carrying ideas and impulses into life.

How to gain co-operation.—There needs to be some systematic plan to gain the cooperation of the

parents. One method is to form a Parents-Teacher Association, composed of the parents and teachers of the Beginners', Primary, and possibly also the Junior Departments. An important part of the work of this association should be a study of the lesson courses. Each year new members will come in, and so each year the general plan of the courses should be explained by some officer or teacher, or the director of religious education, and the particular lessons explained by a department superintendent to the parents most concerned. A mother will take pains to assist at home in lessons which are familiar to her, and the importance of which she sees. Child study and discussions of parents' problems may also be considered in this association, and will aid in gaining the insight of parents and their assistance.

Where there is no such formal organization, there can still be frequent conferences between the teachers and mothers of the Beginners. The best results come from holding these at stated times, and considering the lessons and problems immediately ahead. At least quarterly conferences with parents should be held, in order to keep the interest alive and the cooperation constant.

Printed letters accompany one Beginners' course, to induce cooperation, but any such formal aid needs the personal equation to make it an entire success.

In calls and chance meetings with the children's mothers the truly enthusiastic teacher will show how important as well as interesting she considers her work.

She will discuss the children and what she is trying to do at that particular time, and so gain sympathy on the mothers' part. She will gain as much as she will give by these conversations, for the mothers will tell her of the response of their children to her teachings, and help her to know their particular needs. Cooperation with parents means not only continuous education for the children, and aid to the parent, but important help for the teacher.

Questions

1. Why is home cooperation particularly necessary for Beginners?
2. How is attendance dependent upon cooperation?
3. How can the mothers' cooperation during the class session be secured?
4. What cooperation is desirable in the use of teaching material?
5. In what ways do mothers need to assist children's memories?
6. What opportunities can parents give for carrying out the lesson truths?
7. Through what means can home cooperation be secured?

LESSON XVII

PLANS FOR CONFERENCES

In the direction of the work within a given department the principal will call meetings of the staff of that department.—Walter S. Athearn, in *The Organization and Administration of the Church School.*

It is frequently vedp helpful to call meetings of the workers in two adjacent departments. Let each department tell the other just what it is trying to do, what methods it is using and why, and what other teachers may reasonably expect their graduates will be and know.—*Ibid.*

Three or four times a year the superintendent may profitably assemble all his workers, including the committee on education, principals of departments, teachers, officers, leaders of all clubs and societies, and officers of all clubs, societies and organized classes. This group is sometimes called the school council. By means of these meetings unity of ideals is preserved.—*Ibid.*

Conference of the departmental staff.—There should be regular meetings of the departmental staff, in order to correlate the work and give *esprit de corps.* It is very important to the atmosphere of the department that the assistants should understand fully the aim of the course of lessons and the truth to be impressed each Sunday. If it is possible, each assistant should have a text-book. If not, there should be a typewritten outline for each, or one of the printed outlines furnished by the denominational houses.

At least once a quarter the lessons that are to be taught are explained by the department superintendent. She inspires her assistants with the importance of the

task ahead, points out the results she hopes for, and asks them to notice the effect of certain stories. She may have original plans to initiate, in which their help is needed. Arrangements for one of the special days probably need to be made. She consults with the pianist about new songs. She takes up any practical matters of ventilation or equipment that require attention. She goes over the list of absentees with the secretary.

It is, of course, much better if these conferences can be held each month. In this case they may be connected with the Parent-Teacher Association, occurring just before or just after a general meeting. The mothers will enter freely into the discussions, and the explanation of the lessons and their aims will insure their cooperation at home.

Occasionally a superintendent will test the work of the department by throwing out such questions as the following:

Is our department orderly?

Do the children have opportunities for free expression?

Are we getting into ruts?

Is our room satisfactory, or are we contented because we are used to it? Suppose we enter it as strangers and judge it.

Are we protected from interruptions?

Are we telling too many stories?

Is there enough variety in our songs? enough repetition?

Do we pray as often as we might?

In department conferences a book on Beginners' methods, similar to this text-book, may be studied, or one on child study, or the conference may resolve itself into a story-telling class. When this is the case, time should still be given to immediate pressing local problems. Subjects similar to the following may be reported upon by assistants:

Seasonal Pictures.
Better Ventilation.
Improved Cleanliness of Room.
Transportation for Children at a Distance.
Helpful Current Magazine Articles.
Objects for Offerings.

Intimate discussions of individual children are often a part of these conferences. Here materials may be prepared for week-day work, if there is such a club, or Christmas presents made for the children.

Informal conferences will often occur among the members of the departmental staff before or after a class session or at chance meetings. Indeed, Beginners' teachers are so enthusiastic they are ready to "talk shop" anywhere and at any time.

Interdepartment conferences.—Each department should keep in close touch with the departments just below and above it. In a departmentalized school there is the danger that each department will be sufficient unto itself, and that its teaching force will regard it as all-important. The work in any department is stronger when it is considered as a single link

in a chain. Its teaching force are none the less devoted, but they are wiser. Knowing what has been done before for the children's religious education, they understand what foundation they are building upon, and neither make the mistake of assuming too great development nor of needless repetition. Knowing what is to come after, they are saved from a feverish attempt to cram the children with all the knowledge they feel they ought to have.

The Beginners' Department superintendent should confer with the Cradle Roll superintendent and the teacher of the Cradle Roll class, if there is one. Such conferences need not be frequent or formal. Over the teacups at the home of the Beginners' superintendent is a good place for helpful talks. It is not necessary that the whole staff shall be present, although they should all be invited.

The Beginners' superintendent should know whether the children who are to come to her are having a Cradle Roll course of lessons, such as *Object Lessons for the Cradle Roll.* The teacher of the Cradle Roll class gives her any such course to examine, or, if these lessons are taught by the mothers at home, the Cradle Roll superintendent makes her acquainted with it.

Through these two people she also becomes interested in the children who will soon be her pupils, and learns something of their home life. The Cradle Roll superintendent and teacher gain much from their contact with her, and she gains their assistance in pre-

venting children from entering the Beginners' Department too soon, and their aid in enrolling children when they have reached the age of four. By such informal conferences the first two links in the chain are firmly connected.

The Beginners' and Primary Departments also need conferences. These may be held in connection with the Parent-Teacher Association, or the Beginners' conference, preceding or following the general program. There is great value in having the mothers of both Beginners and Primary children meet with the teacher of both departments to study a book on child psychology or to practice story-telling. There is enthusiasm in numbers and stimulation in diverse experiences and points of view. The staffs of both departments will gain from this interchange of thought. Sometime during the year the Beginners' Course ought to be outlined for the benefit of the Primary teachers, and the Primary Course for the benefit of the Beginners' teachers. A comparison of the two will follow, and stories and Bible verses noted that occur in both, together with the different appeals. It is particularly necessary that the first-grade Primary teacher should be familiar with the Beginners' lessons, to know what stories the children have heard, and what religious ideas she can expect them to have.

School conferences.—The Beginners' superintendent, in order to share the ideals of the entire school, and to have a voice in its management, should attend the occasional conferences of the entire school. She

will not feel herself a part of the whole educational scheme unless she does so. She will have the opportunity here to present the needs of her department. She will also realize the needs of the other departments to which she sends her children. Other superintendents' ideals may raise hers, and hers may raise theirs. These conferences of the general superintendent, heads of departments, religious education committee, and other leaders in the church school are necessary for discussions of general policy and management, and in order that each department shall have equal rights and attention.

Time for conferences.—This triple program of conferences sounds rather difficult for a busy Beginners' superintendent to carry out. It can be modified, however, as has been suggested, by combining some items in a single meeting. A year's conferences, reduced to their lowest terms, as follows, ought to be possible for any Beginners' teacher:

Two school conferences.

Quarterly Parent-Teacher Association meeting or Mothers' Club, preceded by half-hour Beginners' staff conference.

Occasional informal home conferences with the Cradle Roll and Primary superintendents.

Conferences of the right sort are an inspiration and a real help, and a devoted Beginners' teacher will find time for what is truly helpful.

Questions

1. Why are conferences of the departmental staff important?
2. How often should these be held?
3. What should constitute the programs?
4. What interdepartment conferences are necessary for Beginners' teachers?
5. Describe the subjects that may be considered with the Cradle Roll superintendent.
6. What kind of conferences with the Primary teacher are helpful?
7. Why are conferences of the school leaders important?
8. How many yearly conferences can even a busy teacher attend?

Problems for Discussion

A. In a department having one teacher and one assistant whether it is preferable to hold conferences with the Primary teachers of their school, or with Beginners' teachers of the community.

B. When the teachers have little leisure, which conferences are most important—departmental, interdepartmental, or school?

LESSON XVIII

REPORTS ON PRACTICE WORK AND OBSERVATION (I)

The right spirit for the task.—Specific assignments and instructions were given last week by your instructor for this final test of practice in the teaching and conduct of a Beginners' Department. You need in addition some general advice concerning the spirit in which you approach this task.

As far as possible forget yourself and the teachers of the department and fix your attention upon the children. Your great hope is to satisfy their needs and arouse their interest, or as an assistant to keep the wheels running so smoothly that others may do this.

Prepare thoroughly for your assigned duty, with the children always in mind.

Try not to come to this practice work tired, or nervous, or late. A good night's rest, an early arrival and the conviction that one is well prepared give poise and promise success.

In your observation do not focus your attention upon unessential details. Enter into the spirit of the department and judge it with a right sense of values.

Preparation for the first Sunday's work.—Reread Lesson 1, and Lessons VII or XIII, according as you

are to take the position of general assistant, secretary, or pianist.

Prepare in a specific manner, according to the instructions you have received.

Regard this as an initiation of such serious value that you need God's help to perform it creditably.

Making a report.—In your notebooks make two headings—"Practice Work" and "Observation." Under them put the following subheadings and fill in to the best of your ability. Prepare these reports fully enough to give orally in class and also to leave with your instructor.

Practice Work as Assistant

Assignment

(Whether as secretary, pianist or general assistant.)

Preparation

(General, through rereading the lessons indicated, and specific, as outlined by your instructor or Beginners' superintendent.)

Result

(A frank statement of your success or failure, as you see it. Show where you fell short and knew it. Tell any unexpected difficulties that arose, and whether you were able to cope with them. Compare your anticipation of your work, and its realization.)

Notes

(State how you might have done better. Tell how the conditions might have been improved so as to make your task easier. Write whether you would enjoy such a position permanently.)

OBSERVATION

What I Particularly Liked and Why.

What I Particularly Disliked and Why.

Adjectives which Describe the General Conduct of the Department.

Adjectives which Describe the Department as it Might Be Improved.

What Impressions I Think the Children Received.

Any Different Impressions They Should Have Received.

LESSON XIX

REPORTS ON PRACTICE WORK AND OBSERVATION (II)

Preparation for second Sunday's teaching.—Reread the general suggestions in Lesson XVIII for practice work and observation.

Reread Lesson X of this book and the chapter on "How to Tell the Story," in *Story-Telling,* by Cather, for specific help in story-telling.

Prepare your story early in the week.

Tell it aloud to yourself or to a child, or group of children, or students, at least once every day, till it is thoroughly your own.

In the class.—Because the story comes at the end of the session, do not allow yourself to be oblivious of the preceding program. The best preparation will be to enter into the spirit of the hour and so identify yourself with the children that you will long to share your story with them. Then it will not seem a task to be done, but a chance to give pleasure and help.

The report.—Forget that you have a report to write till you are at home, and then make notes under the following headings, while the class session is fresh in your mind.

Practice in Story-Telling

Preparation

(General, through reading the chapters indicated, and preparation of the particular story you were assigned to tell.)

Result

Did I enjoy telling it? If not, why?

Did I forget myself? the children? the story?

Did the children enjoy it? How do I know?

Did I tell it about as I expected to? If not, what was my reason for making changes?

Did the children get the impression I intended they should? How did I know?

What did I do after telling it? Why?

How should I tell it differently another time?

Do I expect to tell a story to a child this week?

Observation

Whether I enjoyed the session more or less than last week's, and the reason.

What expressional activities were used and whether they were effective.

The attitude of the children. Whether it might have been improved.

A problem I should like discussed in class.

LESSON XX

REPORTS ON PRACTICE WORK AND OBSERVATION (III)

Preparation for third Sunday's teaching.—Reread Lesson XI.

Make an original plan for a circle talk based on the lesson truth.

Compare this with the circle talk in the teacher's text-book and combine the best in both.

Present your plan to the Beginners' superintendent for approval. Accept her modification, as she is accountable for the work done in her department. Come to an understanding with her of the changes bound to be made because of the children's response and their remarks.

Become familiar with the songs used in the department.

Become acquainted with the names of as many members of the class as possible.

Find out exactly the time allowed you.

Get the items of your proposed program well in mind, so no notes will be necessary.

Prepare any necessary material for handwork.

Each day consider the theme of your circle talk, till it becomes part of you.

In the class.—Keep your theme well in mind, so

that you will be quick to relate the children's remarks to it.

Carry out your program as planned unless there are very good reasons for changing it. It is poor pedagogy to change for the sake of showing you can.

You are necessarily hampered by not knowing the children well, and will have to use the names of those you know, and ignore the shy ones.

If you find you are losing control of the children, suggest a change of position, all rising to sing, or give crisp orders to stand, rise on tiptoes, turn about, and sit.

Close your part of the program on time, even though you have omitted some items.

Fill out the following outline, as your report:

Practice in Conducting the Circle Talk

Preparation

(General, through reading the chapter suggested, and preparation of the particular circle talk assigned.)

Result

Was it satisfactory to me? to the children? to the superintendent (as far as I could judge?

Did the lesson theme run through the program?

Did I keep to my tentative program? How was it influenced by the children?

Was there freedom for the children? an atmosphere of order?

How was I hampered by not knowing the children well?

What reflections on my story-telling arise from the children's references to it or their retelling of it?

Could I have made better use of songs? drawing?

Was the play spirit a feature of the program?

Were there any conditions that prevented my doing my best? If so, how could they have been remedied?

Which part of the program did I do best—telling the story or conducting the circle talk? Which brought me closer to the children?

Observation

Comparison of my own story-telling and that of the story-teller observed.

Whether the few moments after the story were as effective as they might have been.

Whether the opening service formed a good preparation for my circle talk.

Exactly what feeling the children went home with, different from that they had on entering.

Outline for Summer Observation and Practice Work

Name and Address

Name of School in which Practice Work is Done

Subjects for Notes

(Under each subject make notes on both good and poor work you have done or observed. Be explicit in every case and suggest remedies where the work was poor. Date the notes.)

Story-Telling

Practice Work Observation

The Circle Talk

Practice Work Observation

Songs

Practice Work Observation

Handwork

Practice Work Observation

PLAY

Practice Work Observation

USE OF PICTURES AND OBJECTS

Practice Work Observation

RELATING CHILDREN'S REMARKS TO THE THEMES

Practice Work Observation

PRAYER

Practice Work Observation

AROUSING THE MISSIONARY SPIRIT

Practice Work Observation

DISCIPLINE

Practice Work Observation

WEEK-DAY CLASS

Practice Work Observation

OBSERVANCE OF BIRTHDAYS

Practice Work Observation

EQUIPMENT

GENERAL MANAGEMENT

OTHER NOTES

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